THOMAS GREGG

Early Illinois Journalist and Author

by John E. Hallwas

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Preface

Thomas Gregg was not a great man, but he was an important figure in the early history of Hancock County, and he left a wide range of writings that focus on pioneer life, community origins, the Mormon Conflict, and other matters of interest to students of Illinois history. He was primarily a journalist, and there is a need for studies of the pioneers in that influential field. Prior to this monograph, few volumes about early Illinois newspapermen have appeared. Gregg was also a poet and essayist whose work displays the level of literary achievement that was characteristic of the frontier. Beyond that, he was a leader in Hancock County during the Mormon Conflict, and as yet, all of the extensive biographical studies relating to that era have been devoted to Mormons. Of course, this volume alone will not remedy the imbalance in Mormon Conflict scholarship. Extensive studies should also be done on figures such as Thomas Ford and Thomas Sharp, and histories of Warsaw and Carthage need to be written. But the present monograph should reveal the importance of looking at that tragic era from a perspective that does not center around the Mormons at Nauvoo.

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J. E. H.

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1
From Belmont to Cincinnati

Except for politicians, no occupational group was more influential in early Illinois than newspapermen, and yet most of them are very little known. Hooper Warren of the *Edwardsville Spectator* (and other newspapers), Simeon Francis of Springfield's *Sangamo Journal*, Samuel H. Davis of the *Peoria Register and North-western Gazetteer*, and other journalists played significant roles in the political and cultural development of the state during the pre-Civil War years. Nevertheless, only three early Illinois newspapermen have received extensive attention from scholars: James Hall of the Vandalia *Illinois Intelligencer*, who became the most famous western author of his time, John Mason Peck of the Rock Spring (later Alton) *Western Pioneer*, who was a widely known Baptist missionary and historian, and Elijah Lovejoy of the *Alton Observer*, whose abolitionist articles led to his murder in 1837.

One of the most interesting figures in the gallery of little-known pioneer journalists of the Prairie State was Thomas Gregg, who founded eight newspapers and four magazines–all of which were short-lived–during a career that spanned almost fifty years.[1] He was also a poet, essayist, historian, and horticultural authority. His life offers a vivid example of the cultural leadership and business frustration that so frequently marked the lives of frontier newspapermen, and it also provides insights into the Mormon Conflict in Illinois, of which he was the most important nineteenth-century historian.

Gregg was born on December 14, 1808, near the village of Belmont in the eastern part of Ohio. The tiny frontier community, set in a hill-and-dale landscape of heavy timber that was just being cleared for farming, had been laid out earlier in the same year. During his youth, Belmont never had more than 300 residents and probably had fewer than 200 during his early childhood. Perhaps Gregg's upbringing in the Belmont vicinity kindled the interest in small and struggling frontier communities that was apparent during his later years in Hancock County, Illinois.

His parents were Jacob and Mary (Sinclair) Gregg, who had been married in Loudon County, Virginia in 1792 and had moved by covered wagon across the Applachian Mountains to Ohio in 1804. They were among the earliest settlers in Belmont County, where Virginians and Pennsylvanians soon predominated and tobacco became the primary cash crop. Their decision to homestead in that area was undoubtedly promoted by Samuel and Ann (Sinclair) Gregg, Jacob's older brother and Mary's older sister, who had moved there with their six children one year earlier. Thomas was the seventh of ten children, having two brothers and seven sisters. Hence, there were many Greggs in early Belmont County.[2]

The oldest son of Jacob and Mary was James, who had been born in 1795. He helped his father establish the Belmont County farm and build the small log cabin in which the younger Gregg children, including Thomas, were born. James eventually married and started a farm adjacent to his parents' homestead, and soon afterward, he had his own children to provide for.[3] Like many younger boys in large families, Thomas idolized his oldest brother, and had it not been for an early interest in reading and writing, his own life probably would have followed the pattern set by James.

The Greggs were members of the Society of Friends, and so Quaker values were undoubtedly instilled in Thomas during his early years. Those would have included an emphasis on fair practices and good living, a strong concern for one's fellow men, and a posture of nonviolence in resolving disagreements. Such values would later be tested during the Mormon Conflict of the 1840s. Also, the Quaker concept of brotherhood extended even to Indians and blacks–which was an unusual perspective in the early nineteenth century–and so it is not surprising that Gregg later sympathized with the red men he encountered in Iowa Territory and was firmly opposed to slavery.

As a youngster living on a frontier farm, Thomas also would have learned to do his share of the chores, for a family of small means had to function as an economic unit in order to survive. His earliest duties were probably carrying water from the well and feeding the livestock, after which he undoubtedly graduated to the more arduous tasks of cutting and hauling wood for the fireplace and helping his father with the plowing, planting, and harvesting. There were also annual maintenance jobs, like repairing the split-rail fence and re-chinking the cabin walls, that he must have assisted with. Although frontier life was hard and narrow, it taught self-reliance, determination, and–since most homesteaders were of roughly the same social class and economic status–egalitarianism. Moreover, Gregg's later interest in agriculture (and fruit growing in particular) was certainly a result of having been raised on a farm.

He was educated in the "common schools" of Belmont, the earliest of which was located in a log cabin and operated by Joseph Wright, who had founded the town.[4] Since there was no high school or academy in the tiny community, Gregg's formal education must have ended during his early teens. He then continued to work around the family homestead until he was twenty.

But the world of his youth was not limited to Belmont alone, for the county seat, St. Clairsville, was only eight miles away. Since the first Quaker meeting house in Belmont County was erected there in 1809, the Greggs undoubtedly became familiar with the community when they came to attend services. The small town provided an amazing variety of services for rural residents as well. In the year Gregg was born, when Belmont had only a few families, there were about 400 people in St. Clairsville, most of whom lived in the kind of two-story frame buildings that were common on the timber-rich Ohio frontier. A description of the town in 1808 lists "two schools, five taverns, eight stores well assorted with goods, seven carpenters, three masons, two blacksmiths, two tanners or curriers,

four cabinet makers, one brickmaker, two saddlers, one pottery, one tinner, two manufacturers of cut nails, two clock and watch makers, four shoemakers, three tailors, two turners in wood, one spinning wheel maker . . . one cart wright, two windsor chair makers, one maker of split bottom chairs, two distilleries, one victualler, three physicians, and two attorneys."[5] There were also seven grist mills and eight saw mills in the vicinity.

To young Thomas, St. Clairsville must have seemed like a bustling place, although it grew slowly during his youth. In 1828 he moved there, leaving his aging parents and three teen-age sisters at the homestead. In *The Ohio Gazetteer*, John Kilbourn provides a description of the town in 1830: "*St. Clairsville*, a flourishing post town, and seat of justice for Belmont County. Its position is high and commanding. The circumjacent country is hilly, but produces large crops of grain. This town contains a court house, jail, and markethouse; also, one house for public worship for Friends, one for Methodists, and one for the Presbyterians, situated immediately contiguous, and twelve stores; two printing offices, a bank, and in . . . June 1830, 784 inhabitants."[6] Hence, the population had only doubled since 1808.

Gregg became a printer's devil in the office of the St. Clairsville *National Historian*, where he learned to "print newspapers, and cypher up the profits of the printing business," as he later put it.[7] The publisher, Horton J. Howard, took a liking to the ambitious young man and promoted his career in journalism. Moreover, Howard's view of the newspaper as an historical record had an impact on Gregg, who would later emphasize local history in his Illinois newspapers at a time when few other editors displayed an interest in that subject.

Fortunately, a letter written by Gregg on December 4, 1831–three years after he started with the *National Historian*–has been preserved. It offers a glimpse of a young man who, in spite of limited education, was determined to make something of himself. To his sisters back at the homestead, he confided, "I have adopted the plan that has been adopted by almost all those who have risen, either as poets–as philosophers–or as statesmen–above the common herd of mankind. That plan is to consume plenty of the 'midnight oil.' And I do consume it. . . ."[8] Moreover, he remarked that during his leisure hours in the daytime, "I read–I write–I study." Among the subjects he studied in 1831 was French, a sure indication that he wanted to broaden his cultural background rather than just obtain practical knowledge. It is interesting to find such clear evidence that a newspaper office in a frontier town could provide an opportunity for self-education.

Gregg recognized that his single-minded concentration on learning resulted in a lack of social attainment: "I have endeavored to be otherwise but I cannot. In company I cannot be social–therefore I avoid company. Whatever common sense, knowledge, or understanding I may possess, I lack those powers of conversation, and that affability, which are necessary to one living in the society of his fellows."[9] But as he said elsewhere in the letter, a preference for reading above companionship was a safeguard against the temptations of youth: "By being blest with a taste for literature, I ever prefer a book to company, and it is in the company

of young and ardent companions that the wily tempter lurks."[10] This letter of self-assessment indicates that at the age of twenty-three Gregg was a serious, unsocial, religious, literary, and introspective young man, intent on educating himself and ambitious for a career of cultural leadership.

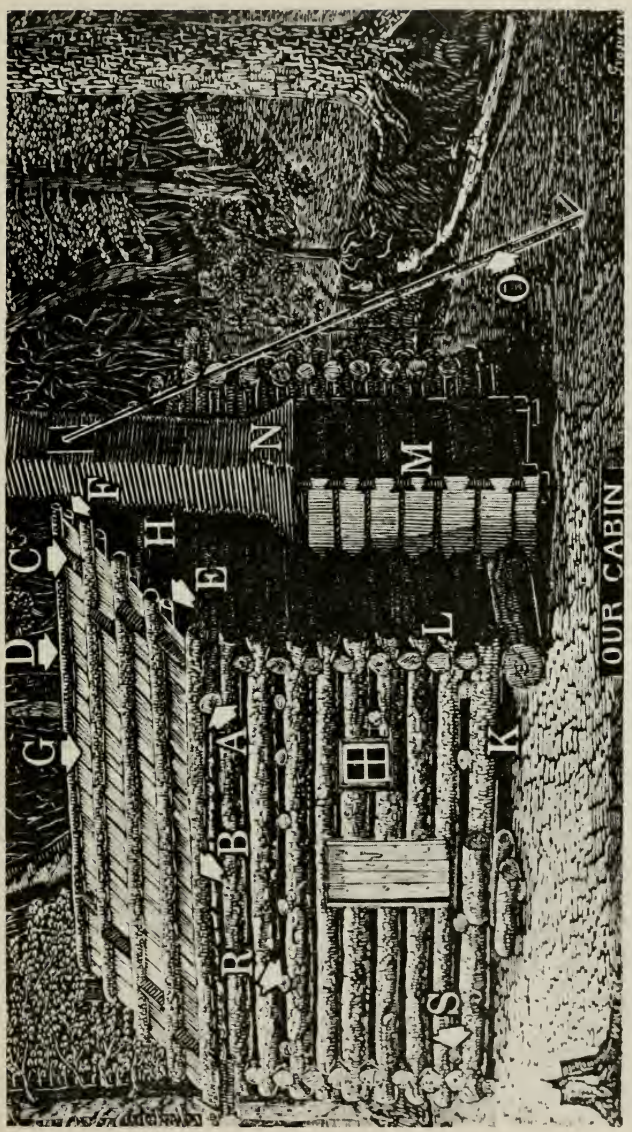
During the next year, he launched his first publication, a bi-weekly magazine entitled *The Literary Cabinet and Western Olive Branch*, which was printed and, to a large extent, financed by Horton J. Howard. According to the Prospectus, it was intended "To call forth the latent talent and genius of the West–to aid in the advancement of literature, science, and art, and in the dissemination of useful and entertaining knowledge. . . ."[11] In order to further his goal of encouraging western literary expression, Gregg offered a $25 prize for the best original tale published in the magazine during 1833. And along with lyrics by British and eastern poets, he published works by western authors like Otway Curry and William D. Gallagher. He also printed essays, such as T. Fisk's article on "Freedom of the Press"–a subject that would later come up during the Mormon Conflict in Illinois–and chapters from a book on the history of Ohio.

Most of the unsigned poems and articles were probably Gregg's own, and among those pieces is an essay entitled "The Indians," which asserts that "the hand of extermination" has been raised against the red men by "the Moloch of civilization."[12] This sounds much like an undated manuscript by Gregg entitled "The Nation's Errors," in which he sums up American treatment of the Indians by saying, "With one or two striking exceptions, the whole treatment of the Indian Tribes, from the first settlement of the country down to the present, and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, has been marked by arrogance and cupidity and oppression."[13] His sympathy for the Indians would later find expression in the pages of the Montrose *Western Adventurer* and the Hamilton-Keokuk *Dollar Monthly*.

An interesting piece of biographical information is found in the issue of February 1, 1834. An announcement about "The First Quarterly Meeting of the Belmont Lyceum" at St. Clairsville, featuring "Several Essays and a Debate," is signed "Th. Gregg, Sec'y."[14] This is probably the first cultural organization that Gregg ever joined, and his leadership role suggests that he had overcome his earlier reluctance to socialize. While in St. Clairsville, he was also an active member of the Friends (i.e. Quaker) Meeting.[15]

During the same year, his magazine's title was changed to *The Western Gem and Cabinet of Literature, Science, & News*, and he took on John Duffey as a partner. This was the first of several journalistic partnerships for Gregg, most of which were with practical printers whose work provided him with more time for writing and editing. However, the joint venture did not keep the magazine afloat financially, for *The Western Gem* failed later in 1834.

By that time, Gregg was already writing poetry and prose for other newspapers and magazines. In a manuscript entitled "Original Compositions," which was compiled in 1839, he included many of his early writings. A poem entitled "Athens" is evidently his earliest surviving lyric, having been written shortly after Leopold of Saxe-Coburg agreed to accept the Greek throne in 1830. (He later



This woodcut illustrated an article entitled "Our Cabin, or Life in the Woods," which appeared in the October, 1843 issue of American Pioneer. *It is based on a cabin built in Belmont County, Ohio early in 1801, and hence, it represents the kind of building that Gregg grew up in. The letters were used to identify various parts of an Ohio log cabin.*

prosperity of the cause of Emancipation be suffered to decline.

And to father and mother say that an ~~dut~~ undutiful son looks back with sorrow on his disobedient acts, and that the best method of proving his penitence ~~with~~ for the past, will be by acts of kindness for the future.

To all the neighbors who care anything for me, tell them that I also care for them.

With Esteem Your brother

Thomas Gregg

The close of Gregg's 1831 letter to his sisters, written at St. Clairsville.

Cincinnati Public Landing in 1835, from a water-color painting by John Caspar Wilde.

withdrew his acceptance to become King of Belgium.) Although it is undistinguished, "Athens" nevertheless indicates that Gregg had some knowledge of ancient Greek culture and a commitment to the cause of freedom. Upon hearing of Leopold's intention to establish his headquarters in Athens and rebuild the Parthenon, the poet looks forward to the restoration of liberty in Greece:

Art thou, again, fair city bright,
    To rise in splendor from the tomb
Of Moslem bondage, and the night
    Of slavery's dark and bitter doom?

And are thy fair and gorgeous halls–
    Thy airy palaces–thy fanes–
To rise again at Freedom's calls,
    And fill thy desolated plains?

Will other groves be now inspired
    With Plato's lore and Sappho's song,
And wondering multitudes be fired?
    Will rise again a Parthenon?

Oh! speed the day, when glory bright
    Shall cover all her walks and bowers–
Her groves and fields, redeem'd from blight,
    Shall bloom again with brighter flowers.

Oh! speed the day when Liberty
    Shall echo far o'er dale and hill–
And Grecian minstrels, wild and free,
    Shall tune their harps by rock and rill.

And will, once more, thy sons aspire
    To the high fame of ancient days?
Will virtue prompt and genius fire
    Their waken'd souls to deeds of praise?[16]

Of particular interest is Gregg's assertion of an interrelationship between the condition of freedom and the cultural flowering of the city. Later, in the towns of Hancock County, Illinois, he worked toward those ends as a newspaper editor, perhaps with the same deep sense of their interrelationship.

Among the items in "Original Compositions" marked "Belmont, 1834" are "Song of the Winds," which appeared in the *Boston Pearl*, and "Winter Musings," published in the *Boston Amaranth*. Both are mediocre nature lyrics, characterized by personification and conventional language. (Evidently Gregg moved back to Belmont from St. Clairsville late in 1834, but the reason for that move is unknown.)

Several poems are dated 1835: "Is There None to Lament," "Song of the Whip-poor-will," "The Emigrant's Farewell," "What Balm Can Heal This Heart of Mine," and "A Fairy Song." While none has any claim to artistic merit, the first is interesting as an expression of Gregg's antislavery sentiments:

> Is there none to lament for poor Africa's daughters,
> Who are forced from their home far beyond the dark wave,
> To the land of white strangers, far o'er the blue waters,
> And doomed to the toil and the woe of the slave?[17]

The second, "Song of the Whip-poor-will," provides an especially clear example of the shortcomings of Gregg's nature poetry. As the following stanza shows, his use of a conventional situation (bird calls at dusk) and equally conventional poetic language ("sable mantle," "flood," "o'er," "mead," "strain," "yon," "bower," and "tune") makes the lyric unsuccessful in spite of its smooth versification:

> Dim Night, with sable mantle spread,
> Envelopes field and flood,
> And stars, with pale and mellow light,
> Shine out o'er mead and wood;
> My mate, too, has begun her strain
> Upon yon distant hill,
> And I, within my leafy bower,
> Will tune my whippoorwill–
> Whip-poor-will.[18]

Such romantic nature poetry was common in the early Midwest, although Gregg's first-person identification with the bird and imitation of the whippoorwill's call are unusual poetic techniques. Like the two previous poems, "The Emigrant's Farewell" appeared in the *Cincinnati Mirror*. An expression of affection for friends left behind, it was perhaps written on the occasion of Gregg's departure for Cincinnati. "What Balm Can Heal This Heart of Mine," published in the *Western Messenger* magazine, is the most explicitly religious of his poems, an affirmation of his dependence on God for inner peace. Finally, "A Fairy Song" is an evocation of fairy revelry that has smooth, song-like versification but no intellectual content. It appeared in the *Boston Pearl*.

Gregg's prose efforts during this period took several forms. His earliest surviving articles are parts one and three of a series (part two being lost) entitled "Letters from the Mid-West to a Down Easter," which appeared in the *Boston Pearl* in December of 1834 and August of 1835. In the first he comments on the growth of Cincinnati and the rapid westward movement of the frontier; in the second he praises the work of western poet Otway Curry of Cincinnati. This series was written under the pseudonym "a Buckeye."

Three other works appeared in the *Cincinnati Mirror* in 1835. "Salmagundi;

or Paragraphs from the Commonplace Book of John Greenleaf Buckeye" is a series of seventeen short pieces on such topics as "Society," "Right and Power," and "Education." The pseudonym suggests that Gregg was an admirer of John Greenleaf Whittier, the popular Quaker poet of New England. In a short paragraph called "The Great West," included in that series, he approves of the *North American Magazine's* characterization of the West as "the citadel of American freedom," and in "Philosophy in Black," he points out that a native of New Guinea received a Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of Wirtemburg–thus asserting that blacks are capable of intellectual achievement.[19] A few of the paragraphs are humorous, such as "A Never-Changing Fashion," which pokes fun at the pretention of book prefaces:

> There is one fashion which, unlike most others, never changes. It is that of writing prefaces to books. A book seldom makes its appearance in the world without having from one to a dozen of its pages appropriated to a Preface. All prefaces, however, have their objects. First, to tell the reader that there is a great vacuum in the literary world, which the book exactly fills; and, secondly, the advantages that are likely to result to mankind from the circulation of said book. This latter is quite as necessary, in some cases, as it was for the painter to write underneath the picture of a horse he had painted the words "*This is a horse*." The fact would be quite as undiscoverable in the one case as in the other.[20]

He also published a book review titled "History of the Condition of Women." Gregg's note at the end indicates that it was written in Cincinnati, where he had moved in the fall of 1835. "Some Account of the Rise, Progress, and Downfall of a Literary Club" was produced at the same time and place. The most interesting of his early prose pieces, it describes a writers' organization of "threescore moons ago" in the "Village of New Dublin," the activities and compositions of which are described in lively, and sometimes humorous, prose. Among the achievements of the club are "5 essays on the subject of happiness–3 about friendship–4, from females, on matrimony–one about domestic affections–and 67 about–nothing."[21] The "Literary Club" article may have been based, in part, on Gregg's experience in the Belmont Lyceum at St. Clairsville.

In 1835 Cincinnati was a thriving city of more than 30,000 people, with three boat yards, eight or nine steam foundries, 100 mercantile stores, and scores of other businesses. More importantly for Gregg's career, it was just entering a golden age of cultural activity that would last until the Civil War. The city had a college, a theatre, and two museums, and it was home for the West's most famous authors, Reverend Timothy Flint, James Hall (who had recently moved there from Illinois), William D. Gallagher, and Otway Curry. Also, it carried on the most extensive publishing activity in the West, as Kilbourn's *Ohio Gazetteer* indicates: "Here are also four large book stores, besides several book binderies, twelve or fifteen printing offices, from ten of which are issued weekly, and semi-weekly

newspapers; and from two of them, daily papers. . . .''[22]

Gregg found a position in the printshop of T. H. Shreve, and he soon made the acquaintance of Gallagher, who edited the *Cincinnati Mirror*, and probably other authors as well. During his brief period of residence in ''the Queen City of the West,'' he may have belonged to one of the numerous literary and debating societies that contributed significantly to the cultural leadership of Cincinnati. The members of those organizations were the principal audience for which he wrote his ''Literary Club'' article.

From one point of view, Cincinnati was an ideal location for an aspiring journalist and author. There were numerous opportunities for self-expression, and the presence of so many popular writers must have made the young city seem like an Athens of the American West. At the same time, however, competition among writers and editors was fierce. It is not surprising that Gregg soon looked to the Illinois frontier as a more promising location for a poor young man who was ambitious for cultural leadership and economic opportunity.

2

Carthage and Montrose

In 1835 Illinois had more than 300,000 people, most of whom lived in the southern part of the state. While the earliest nineteenth-century settlers were mainly natives of the frontier states, there was an increasing tide of emigrants from the East, and soon Europeans would also come in significant numbers. In western Illinois, the population was spreading northward along the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, both of which already had occasional steamboat traffic. The area between those two streams was the state's Military Bounty Tract, set aside by Congress to reward veterans of the War of 1812. Because that region was a desirable mixture of timber land and fertile prairie, and military bounties (land grants, usually of 160 acres) could be purchased from veterans in the East for much less than a dollar per acre, speculators were very active in acquiring and re-selling parcels of land. In addition, when the federal land office was opened in Quincy in 1831, land that was not set aside for veterans could be purchased directly from the government for $1.25 per acre. These factors–inexpensive rich land, promotion by speculators, accessibility by water, and accelerating immigration–caused western Illinois to undergo rapid development in the 1830s.

During 1835 Dr. Isaac Galland of Carthage, a dozen miles east of the Mississippi River, was writing a series of pamphlets entitled *Chronicles of the North American Savages*, and he was sending them to the printshop of Thomas H. Shreve in Cincinnati. Galland, a self-taught physician and frontier businessman, had already been involved in the fur trade, counterfeiting, and land speculation, and he would eventually earn a reputation for shady transactions. He was the founder of Nashville (later called Galland), Iowa, the co-founder of Keokuk and Montrose in the same state, and after Joseph Smith and his followers arrived in Illinois, the seller of land to the Mormons–land to which he did not have clear title.[1]

Because Gregg was setting the type for Galland's pamphlets, and because his older brother James, with wife and children, had gone west to Warsaw (less than twenty miles from Carthage) in 1834, the young printer became interested in that area of the West. He wrote to Galland, asking about the prospects for a newspaper in that frontier community. According to a brief memoir by Gregg, the wily land promoter gave him all the encouragement anyone could ask for: "He answered that Carthage was a new town with highly flattering prospects–that he knew of no place in the North-west more so, excepting Chicago!"[2] The would-be editor and man of letters decided to head west.

Later in the same memoir, Gregg describes his effort to establish a newspaper in Carthage:

> That [Galland's letter] was in the winter of 1835-6; so in the spring I came round [to Carthage]. Not having the means to purchase the printing materials myself, a company was immediately formed, the means raised, and I sent back for the press, &c.
>
> It was a cold, dreary day in April when I first landed in Warsaw; and so you see it must have been well into May before I got the press here and in running order. I mention this for the purpose of bringing in an incident. The press was landed at Warsaw, and had to be conveyed to its destination by ox-power; and so Davy Rout was employed to bring it, which he did–first breaking down in a mud-hole in the night seven or eight miles west of town, and leaving me on guard against the prairie wolves and other "varmints," while he went to town for reinforcements. And that, too, with snow on the ground–although it was May.
>
> The first No. of the paper was issued I think on the 18th day of June, and, although I say it myself, made quite as respectable an appearance as any of the numerous brood of papers that have been issued in the county since.[3]

The Carthagenian and Herald of the Upper Mississippi was the first newspaper ever published in Hancock County. It was printed on a Washington hand press. Developed by Samuel Rust of New York in 1829, that press was lighter and more powerful than earlier models, and it soon drove most others out of the market. Gregg undoubtedly purchased his press at the Cincinnati Type Foundry.

Carthage was a community of only a few hundred people, having been platted in 1833, the year in which it was named as the county seat. At the time of Gregg's arrival, tall prairie grass still grew at the edge of the village, through which paths leading in various directions had been beaten. An Illinois gazetteer for 1837 offers a description of the town that appears to be accurate:

> The population of Carthage must be now (July, 1837) 350 or 400, with 40 or 50 houses. There are four stores, two public houses, one saddler, several carpenters, one or two shoemakers, two practicing physicians, three lawyers, one wheelright, two blacksmiths, two or three cabinetmakers, and three groceries. There are in Carthage a small society of Congregationalists, and one of Methodists, and one of Baptists in the vicinity; and what is perhaps worthy of remark, they all hold meetings in the same house. There is a temperance society here, numbering forty or fifty members, and a female benevolent society, numbering ten or fifteen. There is also a good school generally kept here.[4]

During Gregg's brief period of residence, the town was incorporated and work began on the first courthouse.

Hancock County as a whole had only few thousand people when Gregg arrived. While Carthage was the largest community, Warsaw was almost as big,

having about 300 residents. Montebello, several miles north of Warsaw on the Mississippi, had more than a hundred people. The other six communities in the county were hamlets of perhaps twelve or fifteen families: Commerce (later Nauvoo) and Appanoose on the river, and St. Marys, Augusta, Plymouth, and LaHarpe toward the eastern border of the county. Carthage was located on the edge of the large and beautiful Hancock Prairie, which stretched away to the east toward Crooked Creek (also called the Lamoine River), the only stream of any importance within the county.

The ambitious young printer and editor eagerly became acquainted with the pioneers who had already established themselves in Carthage by 1836. In a letter written fifty-four years later, he recalled some of the town's leading citizens:

> The first Carthage man I ever met was that genial and affable merchant, David W. Mathews, who, with his brothers James B. and Hamilton, were selling goods there. With him I made my first trip across the Hancock Prairie on horseback–a large portion of the way in a *canal*–the roadway serving to hold the water, which was then overplenty, and which the prairie sod prevented from running away. There was also that queer *nondescript* of a Frenchman, Louis Masquerier, who, like a meteor, flashed a brief period, and *went out*. There also I met that dark-eyed, dark-hued, inexplicable, incomprehensible, unfathomable man, Dr. Isaac Galland–whom no man could see through.
>
> And there were Wesley Williams–the man who held all the offices–and the fiery John Wilson, and Walter Bagby, and Artois Hamilton, and that active business clerk Robert Miller, whom all men knew, and the elderly Michael Rickard. There, too, I found that talented, affable, and kind-hearted rising attorney, Sidney H. Little, whose prospects and career were so promising, and whose end was soon to be so tragical.[5]

The last figure, Sidney Little, served in the Illinois Senate from 1838 to 1841. His career was suddenly ended in July of 1841 when he was thrown from his buggy by a runaway horse. He died shortly afterward.

Although all of Isaac Galland's motives may not have been apparent to Gregg at the time, the physician and land speculator was the most important financial backer of *The Carthagenian*. He had formed the Carthage Printing Association, which had about thirty stockholders among the early residents of that town. He knew, of course, that a newspaper could be invaluable in the struggle for community development on the frontier, and as the town grew, the financial situation of speculators and businessmen like himself was expected to improve. An article by Gregg, published in the July 9, 1836, issue, records the confidence that early businessmen had in the growth potential of western Illinois. After describing the great beauty of the region, he remarks, "It may safely be asserted that no section of the country in North America is more aptly calculated for the support of a dense population, and to furnish the necessities of life, and the luxuries of refined soci-

ety."[6] This kind of prejection of a great future for the area was what Galland wanted from *The Carthagenian*.

Like most pioneer newspapers, *The Carthagenian* was a one-man operation, with Gregg gathering the advertisements, conducting the business, writing the local copy, finding suitable articles to reprint from periodical exchanges, setting the type, and running the press. There was simply not enough income–even at three dollars per year for each subscription, which was fairly expensive–for the newspaper to support more than one individual.

No regular issues of *The Carthagenian* survive, but an historical article written over fifty years ago describes the newspaper and reprints some material from two issues that existed then.[7] It was a four-page weekly, with the following motto beneath the title: "While I have liberty to write, I will write for Liberty." Thus, Gregg revealed his desire to promote the cause of freedom, which is also expressed in some of his poems. Of course, there was very little news in the earliest Illinois newspapers, partly because communication was so slow and erratic, and partly because frontier editors were not interested in publishing a chronicle of national and local events. Instead, literature (poems, stories, and travel items), opinions (editorials, speeches, and letters to the editor), and advertisements predominated. Frontier newspapers were viewed as purveyors of truth and morality, and *The Carthagenian* was no exception. Because it also printed lists of land parcels available for sale within Hancock County, Gregg's newspaper was very helpful to settlers and speculators.

The Carthagenian was evidently very well put together, for in November of 1836, noted Illinois author John Russell wrote to Gregg, offering to write occasional items for him in exchange for a subscription. Moreover, Russell mentioned that the most famous man of letters in the state, John Mason Peck, had highly recommended the newspaper: "In October, Rev. J. M. Peck, editor of the '*Pioneer*,' spent ten days in my family. During his stay he frequently spoke of you and your paper. He considers the '*Carthagenian*' as decidedly the best conducted paper in Illinois and insisted that I should take it."[8] This suggests that Peck and Gregg were acquainted by the fall of 1836, and in fact, the former may have been serving as an agent for *The Carthagenian*. Russell's letter initiated a friendship with Gregg that resulted in correspondence between them for the next several years. In 1837, Gregg sent the back issues of *The Carthagenian* to Russell, who then praised the paper's editorial quality in another letter and asked Gregg to write something for the first issue of his own newspaper, *The Backwoodsman*.

But in spite of the compliments that Gregg's paper evoked from the two most widely known authors in Illinois, it did not survive very long. *The Carthagenian* carried ads for businesses in Warsaw, Montebello (which later disappeared), and Commerce, as well as Carthage. Still, there were not enough advertisers or subscribers to support a newspaper in Hancock County at that time–even if they paid their bills, and many did not. Before the end of its first year of publication, *The Carthagenian* failed. After all of his high hopes and hard work, Gregg must have been heartbroken, even though he recognized that journalism on the frontier was

a risky enterprise.

However, the year spent in Carthage was not a total loss for the young editor. Aside from gaining much-needed newspaper experience, he also acquired a wife. When Gregg first came to Carthage, he obtained room and board with Reverend John Lawton, a Congregational minister from New Hampshire who had come west as a missionary in 1834. Lawton resided in a log cabin two blocks west of the square, not far from the Congregational Church, a brick building that had just been completed and was the most imposing structure in town. Because Mrs. Lawton and six of their seven children did not move to the West with him, he returned to his home in Hillsborough periodically. The one child who had come along was Sarah, the oldest, although a few of the others came to Hancock County in subsequent years. She had taught school at Quincy, Warsaw, and Montebello before Gregg arrived in Illinois, and she was teaching at the log cabin school in Carthage during 1836. One of the few young women of any education in that community, Sarah was a good match for the tall, soft-spoken, and well-read young journalist. (She was one year older than Gregg, having been born in Poughkeepsie, New York, on September 10, 1807.) They were married by Sarah's father on November 10, 1836.[9]

Their cultural impact on early Carthage was not limited to their work as newspaper editor and teacher. The Greggs were active members of the temperance society that was mentioned in the 1837 gazetteer description of the town. So was John Lawton, whose sermons were frequently directed against the use of liquor and whose advocacy of the cause probably had an influence on his son-in-law. And Sarah organized the Carthage Female Benevolent Society, the constitution of which was printed by her husband and still survives. The group was committed to "the cause of suffering humanity," examples of which were probably not hard to come by on the frontier.[10]

Along with Sarah's father and other leading citizens of Carthage and Warsaw, Gregg attempted to develop the Carthage Female High School and Teachers' Seminary. As secretary of the board of trustees, he drafted the act of incorporation for that institution on February 15, 1837.[11] Five years later, after John Lawton died in the East while attempting to secure financial support, the venture came to an end without ever having enrolled any students.

Three poems in the "Original Compositions" manuscript were written in Carthage, and two of them, penned in 1836, focus on Sarah. In "Stanzas to S. D. L." Gregg asserts that she has thrown a magic spell on him and asks that it not be broken. "Lines to My Wife, On Presenting Her with a Book of Flowers" centers around a conventional comparison between Sarah and the flowers: both are beautiful and transient. However, Gregg's religious convictions prompt him to state that his wife can also look forward to salvation, when she will "shine with greater lustre in the Heavens!"[12] Sarah probably provided Gregg with encouragement to write poetry, not only because she was occasionally the subject of a lyric but because she also wrote poetry during their early years together.

Gregg's third poem, written in 1837, is more interesting because it is an un-

conventional, humorous composition that arose from the circumstances of life in a frontier village. Entitled "A *Pig*-gerel Poem," it is a complaint about another resident's hog, which, being free to roam the community, was ruining the author's garden. As Gregg says in a footnote, "The above 'Foolery' was written . . . to be used as a public notice, [but] was never put up as such."[13] The poem begins,

> There is a little black Pig–
> Comes into my garden to dig,
> And with his black snout,
> He roots all about–
> And frolics around–
> And tears up the ground. . . .

The lyric soon becomes a warning to the pig's owner, who was unknown to Gregg. In the process, it humorously expresses the author's exasperation:

> So let this be a warning
> To him who may own him–
> That the next time I see this black pig
> Come into my garden to dig,
> I shall certainly bone him
> And kick him and beat him–
> Or kill him and eat him. . . .

Had Gregg written more poems based on his experiences in early Illinois, he would have left a poetic achievement of greater value.

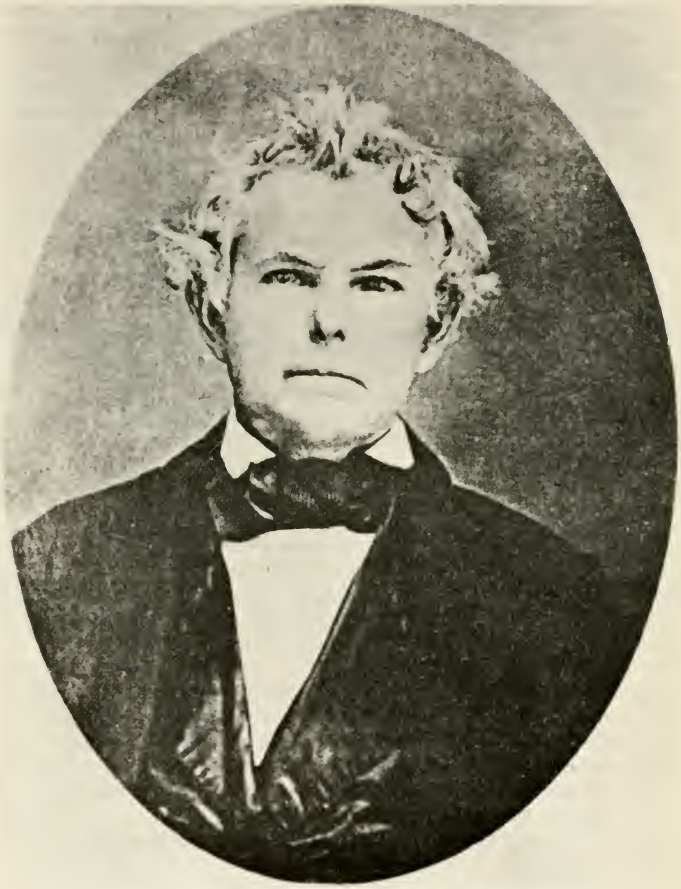
During the same month in which *The Carthagenian* failed, Gregg established a magazine (with the backing of Isaac Galland), one of the earliest in the history of Illinois. Entitled *The Western Emigrant's Magazine and Historian of Times in the West*, it was designed to be a monthly guide for easterners who intended to move to the West. As he stated in the first (and only) issue, published in May of 1837, "The whole West will be included within the sphere of our observation, but Illinois, and the country adjacent, will receive more minute and particular attention. Early history, geographical position, climate, soil and productions, population, commerce, agricultural pursuits, mechanics and mechanic arts, education, improvements, Indian remains, Indian traditions, and in short, every thing connected with the country and its inhabitants, that could be useful to the emigrant or the adventurer, will be embraced in its columns."[14] The issue included gazetteer-type material on Illinois and Missouri–with Peoria, Peruque Village, Alton, and Chicago receiving the most extensive ttention–as well as selected poetry and a section from Washington Irving's *A Tour on the Prairies* (1835). About half of the material was original, written by Gregg. His most important contribution was "Random Sketches of a Journey in Illinois," which includes poetic remarks on the prairies and old Fort Edwards, together with more restrained comment on Warsaw, the Mississippi River, Quincy, and Marion City, Missouri.

Listed among the subscription agents on the back cover of the magazine are two of the earliest noted author-journalists of Illinois, John Mason Peck and John Russell, along with editor Hooper Warren of the *Edwardsville Spectator* and various other men in Ohio and five eastern states. In spite of the attempt to develop an organization for promoting *The Western Emigrant's Magazine*, it also failed for lack of income. This is not surprising, for the absence of advertising revenue and the difficulty of building a subscribership that was not localized were severe problems that even frontier newspapers did not have to tackle. No matter how disappointing, the magazine was Gregg's first attempt to publish a periodical focused on western history and culture, a lifelong interest that achieved its most successful expression forty years later in the Hamilton-Keokuk *Dollar Monthly*.

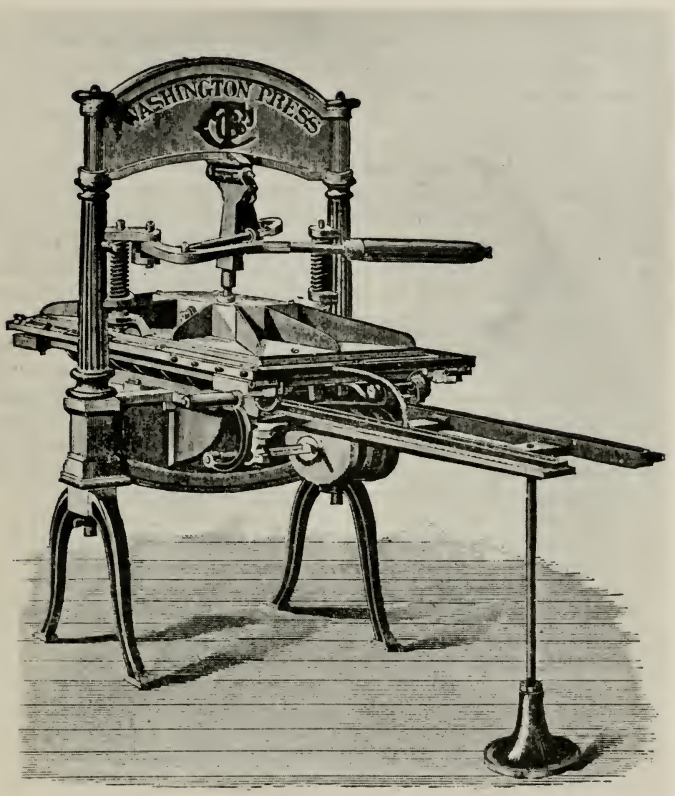
A few weeks after the magazine appeared, Gregg moved to Fort Des Moines, Wisconsin Territory (now Montrose, Iowa) to establish another frontier newspaper. The move was directed by Galland, who had purchased a majority of the Carthage Printing Association stock. He wanted to attract immigrants to that location, across the Mississippi from Nauvoo, where he had extensive real estate holdings. He was also acting as an agent for the New York Company, a group of land speculators who were interested in developing the Half Breed Tract, a nine-million-acre area on the western side of the river. Fort Des Moines had been established in 1834 but the troops left just three years later. Thus, the log buildings they had constructed were available for occupancy by the early settlers.

Fortunately, Gregg and his wife both wrote descriptions of their new location in June of 1837. Sarah's comments are found in a letter to her sister Abby, who lived in Boston. After mentioning the demise of *The Carthagenian*, and their expectation of a $1,000-a-year salary from Galland for editing the forthcoming newspaper, she described their new situation:

> This is a beautiful spot. The garrison of soldiers has just left and we and a few others live in the comfortable houses 'Uncle Sam' has built for them. We occupy two rooms that were the Adjutant's, which are about 19 feet square, and quite nice for this country. I only wish that you were all here to help me gather flowers for our sweet bouquets and pick strawberries for our tea and desserts.
>
> We are no longer Illinoisans, and I felt sorry to leave that pleasant state, though I am in sight of it, the rapid Mississippi just rilling between us, and we can ferry over the water very easily. . . .
>
> This part of the bluff is covered with timber which extends in a vast semicircle around us, leaving a beautiful rolling prairie west and north for many miles. Indians are thick around us. Black Hawk took tea with us last evening. I never got supper for so distinguished a guest. He was dressed in Indian style, was very sober. Dr. Galland, a friend of ours, who can talk with the Indians, was here and introduced him. He [Black Hawk] says he longs to come here to live and lay his bones, for this was his former home.[15]



Dr. Isaac Galland



Gregg used a Washington Press, which was probably made at the Cincinnati Type Foundry.

Obviously, in communicating with her younger sister, Sarah wanted to minimize the deprivations of frontier life and emphasize the romantic aspects, such as wild scenery and contact with the Indians.

Isaac Galland and David W. Kilbourne intended to develop the Fort Des Moines area into a new community, which they named Montrose and began to lay out that very summer. Gregg offers a brief description of the town's setting in the first of several "Letters from the Occident" that he wrote to the *New York Daily Express*: "The situation of Montrose is delightful, being on the edge of a high, rolling, sandy prairie, the eastern border of which, where the fort is located, is gently sloping to and commanding a fine view of the river."[16] At the end of this letter, which also briefly describes the Des Moines River and the Half Breed Tract, Gregg indicates that he intends to issue *The Western Emigrant's Magazine* from Montrose, but he never did continue that publication.

However, he launched *The Western Adventurer and Herald of the Upper Mississippi*, the newspaper that Galland hoped would promote his new community. The first issue was dated June 28, 1837, and it was only the third newspaper published west of the Mississippi and north of the Missouri River. (The earlier ones were also in Iowa, then part of Wisconsin Territory, at Dubuque and Burlington.) In an article written twenty-five years later, Gregg recalled the tiny frontier community in which *The Western Adventurer* was located:

> When the paper was first issued at Fort Des Moines, the barracks of Col. Sumner's Regiment of Dragoons had just been evacuated by the troops, and the press, as well as all the families resident there, occupied the quarters left vacant by the command. There was not another building in the place. The Colonel's quarters were in front of the landing, and the last building among them was occupied as a hotel. The office of the ADVENTURER occupied one of the huts, that of the New York Company another; the seven or eight families, others. Among the latter was that of Captain Brown (afterward Brigadier General of the Iowa militia), an officer of commanding appearance under Col. Sumner, whose term of service had expired.[17]

Captain Jesse B. Brown, nicknamed "The Tall Cedar of Lebanon," was a colorful frontier figure, and Gregg later wrote an article about him for the Keokuk *Gate City*.[18]

Like many frontier newspapers, *The Western Adventurer* carried articles of travel and description, along with some literature, usually reprinted from eastern periodicals. But it was unusual because of the editor's sympathetic interest in the plight of the Indians. For example, in one issue Gregg quelled a rumor that the Sauk and Fox Indians "have become very disquiet, and commenced depredations upon our settlers."[19] In general, on the question of government treatment of the Indians, he sided with the dispossessed red men. He even started an "Indian Biography" column, which included among its contents an article on Red Jacket by the famous James Hall of Cincinnati.

The second of Gregg's "Letters from the Occident," which was printed in *The Western Adventurer* as well as the *New York Daily Express*, is particularly interesting because it discusses the treaty through which the Half Breed Tract was acquired and also includes comments on the two most famous Sauk Indian leaders, Black Hawk and Keokuk:

> The terms of the treaty are very favorable to the government, even much more so, than fair and just towards the Indians. The whole cost is something more than $800,000–which for 9,000,000 acres, would be less than nine cents an acre. This sum is to be paid them in various ways, in annual installments for twenty years; and I have no fear in hazarding the assertion tht the tract will contain 300,000 inhabitants before the last installment becomes due.
>
> The agent of the U. S. government passed up yesterday, on his way to Rock Island, with blankets and money for the payment of the annunities due the Sac and Fox tribes of Indians. These annuities are paid to Keokuk, a chief of the tribes, who lives finely on the money–and who, it is said, owes the American Fur Company more than the annuities will amount to for three years to come.
>
> As an instance of the justice and fairness of our government, in its dealings with the Indian tribes, I will first state the case of the above-mentioned Chief Keokuk, with that of the celebrated Black Hawk. The latter is a high-minded and honorable man–remarkably temperate in his habits–and, so far as I have learned, bears the good will of all his white neighbors. Yet he was degraded from his rank of chieftan [sic] by the strong arm of power, and stripped of all his authority over his tribe; while the favor of the government was extended towards Keokuk, who was exalted to a high rank in the nation–was appointed caretaker of the annuities–and, who is withal, one of the greatest scamps. Keokuk was found to be more favorable to the grasping and ambitious designs of the whites, and more easily duped by their artifices–whereas Black Hawk had not only opposed their encroachments, but had lifted the tomahawk and shed his blood in defense of his country and the bones of his sires.[20]

Black Hawk had evidently made a positive impression upon Gregg during their brief acquaintance in Iowa Territory, and the young editor also may have read the Chief's autobiography, which had appeared in 1833. Years afterward, he recalled Black Hawk's appearance, thus providing one of the few eyewitness descriptions of the famous chief which have survived: "The old gentleman always wore a hat of a dingy stovepipe look–the gift of a friend among the palefaces. . . . A white blanket–no, a woolen blanket that had once been white, and might have been white again–could it have been brought in proximity to the waters of the Mississippi and a box of soap–and a breech-cloth, and leggins, ditto, and a plain pair of mockasins, about completed his toilet."[21]

The most influential of Gregg's articles on the Indians for *The Western*

Adventurer was an obituary of a half-breed maiden of the Sauk Tribe, which begins as follows: "Died, on the 10th instant, of a lingering consumption, at the wigwam of her mother, Me-ko, a Sac squaw, in the vicinity of this place–Ka-la-we-quois, the daughter of an early French trader, at the age of 18 years."[22] He notes that the press seldom reports the death of an Indian, and so they die "unwept, unhonored, and unsung" by the world. In Kalawequois's case, few attended the burial ceremony (although Gregg himself was there), "and no one wept over the grave of the maiden . . . but the mother. . . ." The sentimental possibilities inherent in such a circumstance were too much for the famous eastern poetess Lydia Sigourney to resist, and so she wrote "The Indian Girl's Burial," which appeared in *The Western Adventurer* on October 14 and was later reprinted in other newspapers and in collections of her poetry. Sigourney had been acquainted with Gregg since 1834 when she published poems in his *Literary Cabinet* magazine.

Gregg exercised his writing ability in other ways too. Among the scattered surviving issues, for example, is a brief satire on speculation towns entitled "Unrivalled Attraction. Great Sale of Lots in the New City of Humbug." In that essay, he ridicules the exaggerated claims of those who lay out "paper towns." He also pokes fun at the practice of naming villages on the frontier after major cities of the world, as if the names alone would bring future greatness: "We have Moscow without its Kremlin . . . Rome without its Coliseum, Carthage without its Dido, and even the Celestial Empire has lent its imperial cities of Canton and Pekin, to adorn the wilderness."[23] The satire is unsigned, probably because Galland would have objected to Gregg's authorship of such an item–but the references to western Illinois towns, the subject of speculation communities (of perennial interest to Gregg), and the style suggest that it was the young editor's work. He also occasionally published a column entitled "Military Tract Pioneers," composed of original and reprinted information on early residents of western Illinois, which foreshadowed his concern with that subject thirty-five years later in *The Dollar Monthly*. Few other pioneer editors published items of local history.

Finally, it is worth noting that in an article on anti-abolition activity, Gregg objected to the mob action against Elijah Lovejoy that was beginning to develop at Alton, and he spoke out on behalf of minority rights: "Allow the doctrine to prevail that the minority must submit to the will of the majority, and no man is safe. Circumstances may occur to render even the most favored doctrines unpopular–and because they are unpopular, must a maddened and infuriated mob be turned loose upon those who hold them?"[24] This displays his sensitivity to problems that would be at issue several years later, after the Mormons had settled in Hancock County.

During his residence in Montrose, the young editor also expressed his opposition to slavery. Although the surviving issues of *The Western Adventurer* contain no abolitionist essays by Gregg, he did attend the antislavery convention at Alton on October 26-28, 1837.[25] He was the only participant from Wisconsin Territory. In addition, Gregg's authorship of abolitionist articles is suggested by a letter from

his friend John Russell, editor of the Grafton *Backwoodsman*, in which the former is urged to contribute: "Write as often for the Backwoodsman as you can. . . . No matter what you write, except on *Abolition*, it shall appear."[26] In the aforementioned, undated (pre-Civil War) manuscript on "The Nation's Errors," Gregg refers to slavery as a national disgrace–"self-evidently wrong" and "contrary to the commonest dictates of humanity."[27]

As one might expect, *The Western Adventurer* ceased publication by 1838. There were even fewer people to support a newspaper through subscriptions and advertisements in the Montrose area than there had been in Carthage, and the Panic of 1837 had brought on a depression that retarded the growth of frontier communities for about five years. Moreover, the paper's owner, Isaac Galland, was a man of limited financial means and was more of a land speculator than a community builder.

Late in 1837, while the newspaper was failing, Gregg was searching for the money to launch a literary periodical. He wrote to Russell, proposing a partnership. That letter does not survive, but Russell's long and interesting response indicates that the idea was well received–and it also reveals his admiration for Gregg:

Bluffdale, Dec. 2, 1837

My Dear Friend:

It is only an hour ago that I first saw your letter proposing a periodical of a literary character. I have been sick at Grafton, but expecting every week to return. . . .

I was struck, at once, with the conviction that we can succeed in the paper you propose. Why not? Th. Gregg, Esq., is known to all who read anything, and "that little Russell" is not without his share of friends. The cash would be the only rub, and I think I could raise a few hundred dollars, but not more. I am far from being rich, though not exactly poor. I have one of the best farms in the west, upon which is a good orchard, which bore this year about 1,000 bushels of choice fruit–a good barn–stone house partly finished, &c. but am not blest with an abundance of cash. Could we "go ahead" one year, I would risk patronage. Your name alone in this region would insure it a heavy patronage, and mine would not be useless. Springfield is overwhelmed in politics–that place will not do. Alton is the only town in the state that would enter, spiritually, into the patronage of such a paper. In that city and vicinity there is much literary taste, with all their rascally mobocracy. But should they take it into their heads that we were Abolitionist, all would be over.

For one year I am bound, hand and foot, to the Backwoodsman. Like your paper, it is owned by Proprietors, and I think they will not continue it beyond the year. We already print nearly 1000, and subs. are daily coming in, but they pay the printer such an enormous price that they will certainly fall in the rear, and would be in arrears with 1500 or even 2000. If capital cannot be obtained for a literary paper,

> I have no doubt we can take hold of a common paper here, that will be profitable. . . .
>
> Should we be able to make the experiment, I should gladly join you in the proposed plan. If funds cannot be obtained, and I know not how much will be necessary, then you can, if you please, join me in the B[ackwoodsman] at the close of the year. Of this I am quite sure, tho' I have not said anything to the proprietors about their giving it to us. I nearly know that they will, and if they do, it will be a fine chance for you. We could make that partly literary.
>
> If the thing is possible, we must be connected in some kind of paper.
>
> I have lately seen more of your poetry. The Fairy Song in the Pearl has nothing superior to it in our language, of that species of writing. There is a depth of feeling manifested in all your poetry that belongs only to the legitimate children of the Muses.
>
> All who read, in this part of the state, are familiar with your name, and often wonder how you came to be located where you are.
>
> Will you write to me soon, and often, on the subject of a paper? I am sanguine in the belief that we may start something that will go well. . . .
>
> Respectfully and affectionately,
>
> J. Russell[28]

The literary periodical was never launched, probably because of the expense involved, although Gregg may have reacted strongly to Russell's insistence on Alton as a location, since he was committed to the abolitionist cause and Lovejoy had just been murdered there. Moreover, Gregg did not accept the kind offer to co-edit the Grafton *Backwoodsman*, perhaps because he knew that a struggling newspaper simply could not support two editors.

Fortunately, while her husband was trying to succeed with *The Western Adventurer*, Sarah was teaching school, which must have been a welcome source of additional income for the Greggs. Montrose was the fifth frontier community in which she had taught. That her own view of the Indians was as sympathetic as her husband's is evident from the fact that her students included some Indian children.

In spite of the newspaper failure, the Greggs remained in that pioneer village until the summer of 1839, as indicated by the dating of various works in the "Original Compositions" manuscript. Among the prose pieces are two "Occidental Sketches" that were written for the *Cincinnati Chronicle* in June and August of 1838. The first deals with the Mississippi River, the nearby bluffs, and the prairies–all distinctive features of the western landscape. Gregg asserts that these should be the subject of poetry, and he is especially adamant about the prairies. He mentions that only William Gallagher, briefly in "The Penitent," and William Cullen Bryant, in "The Prairies," have taken up that subject, and so he launches

into a description of the landscape. For Gregg, the prairies were not only "a splendid sight to behold" but a reflection of "the power, and glory, and goodness of the Almighty."[29] The second of his sketches briefly describes the new Iowa Territory–its size, topography, and early settlers. On a similar subject is an article entitled "To the People of Iowa Territory," which appeared in the *Fort Madison Patriot* on July 4, 1838–the day when Iowa was separated from Wisconsin Territory. Written under the pseudonym "Hamilton," it predicts a great future for Iowa and stresses the need for improvement of native resources.

Another prose item from Gregg's two-year residence in Iowa is "The Peace Principle," an essay "written sometime during the winter of 1838-9, in the form of a Lecture to be delivered before the *Montrose Lyceum*, Iowa Territory."[30] It was subsequently published in the *Peoria Register and North-western Gazetteer*. The essay has no outstanding merit, but it is significant as an early expression of Gregg's belief in nonviolent solutions to societal problems. Indeed, he goes so far as to say that a man "should *suffer*, or even *die* in the RIGHT, rather than that he should engage in the strife [of violence], and *live* in the WRONG."[31] This viewpoint was undoubtedly a result of his Quaker upbringing. It is interesting to note that during the previous winter, Abraham Lincoln had delivered a similar address to the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, deploring the growing incidence of mob violence in the West.

Gregg wrote at least a few lyrics while in Montrose, for three items in "Original Compositions" are labeled with that location. All were written in 1839 and were, at that time, unpublished. "Winter" and "Spring–A Fragment" are short companion pieces in which the author longs for an end to winter storms and looks forward to seeking the early flowers of spring. "Emblems," dated June, 1839, is an equally conventional lyric which asserts that the brighter things of life (stars, flowers, etc.) will eventually fade.

"Original Compositions" also contains two poems by Sarah Gregg, both of which were produced in Montrose. "Lines to an Absent Husband" was written during Gregg's trip to the antislavery convention at Alton in October of 1837, and in it she longs for his company during the fall evenings. "Stanzas to a Prairie Lark" was written in 1839 and expresses her joy at hearing a lark sing each morning. According to Gregg's footnote, it was first published in the Grafton *Backwoodsman* and *Peoria Register and North-western Gazetteer* and later appeared in the New York magazine, *Ladies' Companion*.

Life was difficult on the Iowa frontier in the late 1830s. Indeed, Gregg was ill for a month with ague (a type of malaria commonly called "the shakes") shortly after they arrived at Fort Des Moines, and naturally, there were shortages of food and other goods, the log buildings were cold in the winter, mosquitoes were a constant annoyance in the summer, mail service was irregular, and the few roads were often in poor condition. Nevertheless, as their poetry suggests, the Greggs were determined to enjoy the brighter aspects of western frontier experience–wild flowers and meadowlarks outdoors, and long evenings together in The Barracks (as their military quarters were called) with time for reading, writing, and reflec-

tion. At no other location would their abiliity to triumph over adverse circumstances be so severely tested.

3

Warsaw–the Early Years

The Greggs moved to Warsaw in July of 1839. While there is no clear evidence to indicate why they selected that town, the presence of James Gregg and his family may have been one reason. Since residents of the area expected Warsaw to develop into a large and significant Mississippi River community, Gregg probably also felt that newspaper opportunities would open up there sooner or later. His comments in *The Western Emigrant's Magazine* reveal that he had been aware of the local confidence in Warsaw's future: "About a quarter of a mile below Fort Edwards, and adjoining the grounds attached to the Fort, is the new but rapidly improving town of Warsaw. Considering the advantages which this place possesses, in point of situation, it is believed that it will, ere long, become a place of considerable importance."[1] Gregg had been encouraged in this view by the town's promoters, whom he had met while living in Carthage. Toward the end of his life, he recalled those men and their outlook: "John R. Wilcox, Mark Aldrich, John Montague and James M. Wells–whose faith in their new city's future, if carried to its full fruition, would ere this [1890] have placed Chicago in the background. . . ."[2]

This optimistic view of future development was common to residents of Mississippi River towns during the steamboat era, but Warsaw businessmen felt particularly confident of their community's growth potential because the Des Moines Rapids prevented large boats from traveling up the river past Warsaw, except in periods of high water. Hence, people thought the town would become a large shipping port and travel stop on the Upper Mississippi. Also, Warsaw was expected to be the terminus of a planned railroad that would run between the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, and so it was regarded as an important future connecting point between rail and river transportation. That the Des Moines River emptied into the Mississippi directly across from Warsaw was noted by developers and businessmen as well, for they saw that smaller stream as a potentially important means of access into Iowa Territory.

Warsaw was laid out in 1834 at the location of Fort Edwards, a military installation that had housed troops from 1817 to 1824 and then was used as a fur trading post until 1832. Hancock County's earliest community, a village of less than 100 people, had been established around the fort during the 1820s. The first county elections were held there in 1829. Thirty years later, Gregg described the fort as it appeared when he first saw it in 1836: "Fort Edwards was then in tolerable condition–the Colonel's quarters, magazine, and two block houses still standing. It stood on a high bluff west of town, overlooking the river."[3] At that time, James Gregg lived in the colonel's residence, where he operated a boarding house. The

fort became increasingly dilapidated and was finally torn down in the mid-1840s.

Warsaw itself grew steadily for a few years, until the depression of the late 1830s retarded land acquisition and business development. When the Greggs moved there in 1839, the town's population was about 450. A description of Warsaw published a year and a half later listed "8 or 10 stores, 2 taverns, 2 steam mills, several warehouses, 1 printing office, 1 lawyer, 2 physicians, and various kinds of mechanics."[4] The same account mentions that pork packing was an important local business, and undoubtedly steamboats arrived often in warm weather, bringing goods from St. Louis and New Orleans and emigrants from the East Coast and Europe. (Warsaw developed a considerable German population prior to the Civil War.) The community was, in fact, a popular location for shipping and receiving goods among the western Illinois settlers who lived to the east and north because of the navigation problem at the Des Moines Rapids.

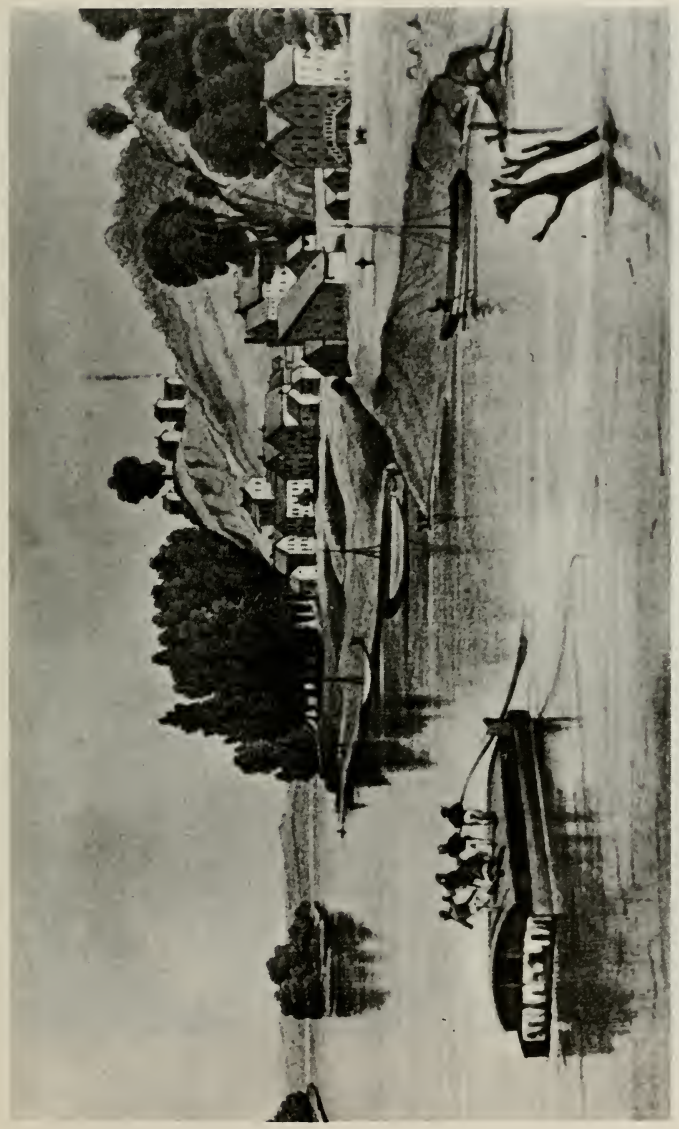
Of course, Gregg was without a printing press at the time he moved to Warsaw, for the equipment he had brought from Cincinnati belonged to Isaac Galland, who had already sold it to James C. Edwards, founder of the *Fort Madison Patriot*. Although the community had no newspaper when the Greggs arrived, D. N. White launched the *Western World* in 1840. There is no evidence that Gregg was involved with that publication.

In fact, he had no steady work during their first year or two in Warsaw. He mentioned his unemployment in letters to John Russell, commenting in one of them that he spent much time studying law (reading Blackstone).[5] As always, he was full of plans for publication projects–including a book on Iowa Territory and a Whig magazine to be launched in Quincy.[6] Neither of those ever appeared.

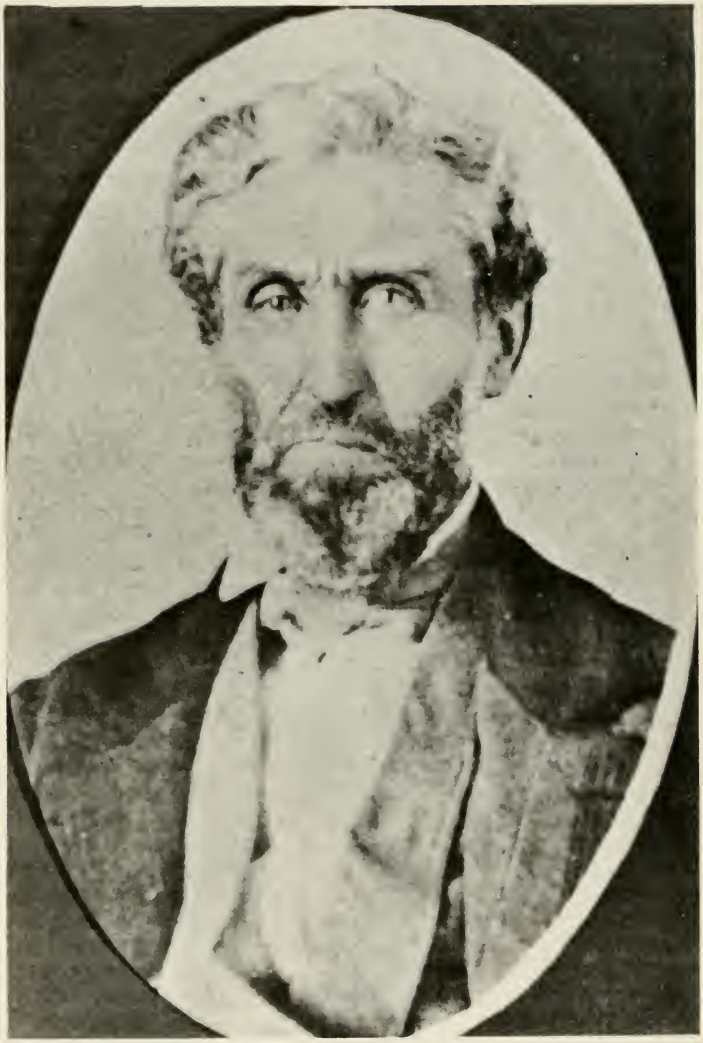
Fortunately, Sarah had developed a position for herself in Warsaw. During the fall of 1839 or the winter of 1840 she organized "Mrs. Gregg's Female School."[7] The enrollment record for a two-month summer session, July 20 to September 20, 1840, survives, and it contains the names of forty-two students, ranging in age from two to twenty.[8] Sarah was paid $90 for that session.

Because of his unemployment, Gregg found considerable time to write. Five poems and four articles in his "Original Compositions" manuscript date from his first few months in Warsaw. The earliest lyric is "The Fairy Revelers," written on July 22, 1839. It is a poor poem in which the speaker wanders outdoors at midnight and comes upon a group of fairies, who are singing a song. Another July composition, "Lines," commemorates the Gregg's wedding anniversary (which was not in July, but November). It is unfinished, which may indicate that Gregg ceased to write poetry for awhile after the summer of 1839. At about the same time, he wrote two other unimportant lyrics, "Fragment" (on friendship) and "Bury Me Not in the Deep Dark Sea," which expresses a preference for burial in a calm forest glade rather than in the vast and wild ocean.

In August Gregg wrote "Me-kus-ka's Harp is Broken–An Indian Song." Although not very successful, and probably not based on a real Indian song, the poem is nevertheless interesting:



Lithograph of Warsaw in 1848, from Henry Lewis's Das Illustrirte Mississippithal.



Thomas Gregg

Thomas Sharp

WARSAW MESSAGE.

BY TH. GREGG.) The Best-of the Present—for the Future. ($1.50 PER ANN.

Vol. 1. WARSAW, ILLINOIS, FEBRUARY 7, 1844. No. 47.

THE WARSAW MESSAGE.

WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING IN WARSAW, ILLINOIS.

TERMS.

For 1 Year, $1.50
For 6 Months, 75
For 3 Months, 37½
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For the first insertion $1.00
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For the Warsaw Message.

Mr. Editor:

Sir: If you see proper you may publish the enclosed verses in your paper, they are some interesting on account, but much the more necessary for publishing them, for it is my opinion that all should know that there are undoubtedly thousands in this country who will neither worship the image nor bow down to the *Spread*.

BUCKEYE'S LAMENTATION

FOR WANT OF BOOK WORM.

I once thought I had knowledge great,
But now I find 'tis small;
Since thought I'd Religion, too,
But I find I've none at all.
For I have got but one lean wife,
And she obtain no more,
And the doctrine is, I can't be saved,
Unless I've *half a score!*

2.

The narrow gate that Peter kept,
In ages long ago,
Is locked and barred since he gave up
The keys to *boarding-Jew*
And Jim proclaims it is too small,
And causes great delay,
And that he has prospected 40
To open the broad way.

3

The narrow gate did well enough
When Peter, James, and John,
Did tend the ninety-nine on guard,
In *single file* along
When bachelors, like good old *Paul*,
Could win the glorious prize,
And *monks*, without a marriage rule,
Reach *mansions* on the skies.

4

But we have other teaching now,
Of greater glories far;
How a *single glory* is nothing more
Than some low twinkling star.
A two fold glory's like the moon,
That shines so sweet at night,
Reflecting from her gracious lord
Whatever he thinks right.

5

A *trefold* glory—this the prize!
Without it you're undone!
But with it—oh—all shine as bright
As the bright shining sun.
There you may reign like mighty *Gods*,
Creating worlds as fair;—
At least a *world* for every *wife*
That you take with you there.

6

The man that has got ten fair wives,
Ten worlds he may create;
And he that has got less than this,
Will find a better fate
The man or woman that he may have,
He'll be deprived of them;
And they'll be given as angels were
To him who has got ten.

7.

And 'tis so here, in this and life—
Both life you must endure—
Your *present or king*, may claim your wife
Because that you are poor

A revelation he may get—
Refuse it if you dare!
An I won't be damned perpetually,
By our good *Lord the Mayor!*

8

But if that you could willingly,
Your daughters and your wives,
In spiritual marriage to our Pope,
He'll bless you all your lives;
He'll *seal you up*, he damned you can't,
No matter what you do—
If that you only stick to him,
He swears ou'll take you through

9.

He'll lead you on to the broad gate,
Which he has opened wide—
In solid columns you shall march,
And enter side by side.
And mid-day you'll meet with three,
But *forward march* you shall;—
For he's not only our *Lord Mayor*
But *Lord* LIEUTENANT, too.

10.

This is the secret doctrine taught
By Joe and the red rams!—
Although in public they deny—
But then we all a sham.
Then fear the indignation jam,
Of those who have come here,
With hands their claws and hoarse hearts.
To serve the Lord in fear

11

Then, all the *twelve* do slyly march,
And style *p. prince*, too;
And even the *stage Patriarch*,
Want her *a second his shoe*.
For sure, 'twould be quite impolite,
If a m's great disgrace,
To have a widow sister fair
Spit in a Prophet's face!

12

But Jim at nearing heats them all,
"And at the rest does laugh;
For widows poor, and orphan girls,
He can entomb with *chaff*.
He sets his snares around for all,—
And very serious fools
To catch some the spotless *Partridges*,
Snow-birds or *Knight* ingales!

13

But there are hundred other birds
He never can make wing;
Who must be driven our dinged to hell,
By *prophet*, priest or king
Whose sons have bled in days gone by,
For their dear country's cause;
And who will still maintain its rights,
Its Liberty and Laws!

*B Y & O. H.

For the Warsaw Message

LEAP YEAR.

Another Leap Year has arrived! How are we of our female friends, who stand upon the easy verge of womanhood—beautiful representants of Maintenance, family anticipating the hour that bears upon its wiry wings the bliss of Hymen, as one of the greatest, happiest moments of their lives—by such, we would say, do not let this auspicious time glide away improvidently, unimproved.

There is too much presence of human disposition—male more than female, to defer time, perhaps that constitute our blessed now. A mitigating circumstance, however, is, that leap-year, "like Angels visits, are few and far between," to grant the fair the power to woo the objects of affection, though the disposition prompt at all times. There is a retired modesty—the attribute of woman only, and can, the brightest gem that sparkles in her character, that forbids her cupid-smitten heart to make love

The office properly belongs to man—he has the power, the time, the opportunity—and is not bound down to leap-year only—associated and chained by the mere usage of a thousand years.

Love is a golden chain that ties the husband to the wife—the mother to the infant—and the infant to its mother. Love is the pure, eternal fountain, from which flows the standing river of conventional liberty—around whose flowery banks congregate a host of heroic and chivalry, men ardent and devoted than the visionary Hindoo, who worships the golden Ganges. Love is the mighty moral law of gravitation, that binds our little orb together with a thousand spheres—that wheeses through the immensity of space to the throne of heaven. And were it severed—were it broken, the husband from the wife—the daughter from the mother—the fond and confiding girl from her lover—man from man—world from world and orbs from heaven! God! would part forever! Love is a spark from heaven—who repulse its influence—who quench its fire!

Without its genial influence, society is a waste—the household a dreary bedlam, and man a demon. To one the youthful couple touched with its sympathetic fire—upon whose cheeks health blooms like rose buds—whose bright eyes flash intelligence—the lightning of the mind—upon whose Western sky Hope casts her rainbow promises—whose hearts Vesuvius binds together, present the—eliza, and about upon Hymen sacred altar the sweet alliance of affection to each other; seem to art too pure for mortals—seem to come down far above their species, and approximate them to Angelic purity.

The matrimonial bent—bright epoch in the history of the fair; how full of wild delicious bliss. Blessed hour! unmixed with mortal sorrow—that makes the past forgotten—the future all a bliss and holds the present into a little golden paradise where music rumbles around the canopy.

Then Ladies, before this leap-year shall have rolled around, if to the sick wish for home holiday, was to the bliss of matrimony, those timid, modest, summoning beings, who in the form of Nature's Lords, stride over her fence unmindful of her duty. Heaven the lonely solitary mourners, who cross and wind ordinary, dwells in the air inhaustible of a dreaming force of imaginary bliss flint through his brain, before his temples shall have grown hoary with the frost of age, and his blood turn back along his frigid veins, freeze as ruddy ice around his heart

OMEGA

MR. CALHOUN.

Relerring to the report of the withdrawal of this gentleman, and the difference between him and Mr. Van Buren, the Charleston Mercury says:

"And these 'questions' we say for the thousandth time, are the soul and life of the whole difference between the Calhoun and the Van Buren men. In comparison with these we will not consider the personal question at all. If we cannot support the Democratic ticket, the true creed, with Free Trade at its head, is supported by Mr. Van Buren, then we will never support him, though forty Conventions should nominate any man nomination. And if we can support that creed better by supporting him, we shall take good care not to let the interests of any man interfere. As to the National Convention we have never desired its existence and therefore care precisely little whether it is composed of men or mankind. What is reasonable or good in itself is not made a particle more or less the question of such a body, and what is bad is not a whit worse for its approval and praise."

Where one is always telling old stories, he is either a *buff-on*, a *fool* or a very tedious companion.

NAVAL MONUMENT

It is stated that a beautiful cenotaph of marble has just been erected at Mount Auburn, Boston, by the officers and scientific corps of the late Exploring Expedition, to the memory of four of their gallant young companions, who lost their lives in the service of their country. The inscription gives the names, ages, and deaths of Lieut. Underwood, and Midshipmen Wilkes, Henry, Reed, and Bacon.

The Whigs of New Orleans, inspired by their late victory, are at such like patriotic bursts as the abdicatement of the great cause to which they are devoted. At a large general meeting, they adopted a most spirited series of resolutions, among which was the following:

Resolved, That though the object of the present meeting is more immediately connected with our local politics, yet every meeting of the Whigs is a proper and notable occasion for expressing, as the meeting now does, their unmoated and unwavering confidence in Henry Clay, and that through good and through evil report, through calm and through storm, the New Orleans will adhere to him, as their *first*, their *last*, their only choice for President of these United States, and that we will listen to no offers—no proposals—no compromise of any kind or nature whatever, that have for its object the substitution of any other name. The Whig party want, and will have for their next President, a man that has the ring of true steel in him, and with whom there is neither change or shadow of turning, and the Whigs of this city hail with delight the cheering prospects that already smile on us from the sentiments of Haters of the West, and pledge themselves that no sacrifices and no sacrifices in their part shall be wanting to secure that glorious result."

The Whigs of North Alabama in Motion.—The Huntsville Advertiser contains the proceedings of a meeting in Huntsville, at which several strong resolutions were passed approving of a book which should provide no uniform currency, and a tariff sufficient for revenue and sufficient protection to home manufactures, guarding them foreign paper. The support of Mr. Clay for the presidency to any other man in the Union, and they are for him, "*first, last, and all the time*."

Others in Massachusetts—On Thursday last, some citizens of Newburyport, on a hunting excursion, secured three Otters; the largest measured four feet nine inches in length and weighed 23 pounds. The other two measured nearly four feet, and weighed ninteen pounds.

A Cock Fight.—They mean no species of amusement in New Orleans. A cock fight was in time to be succeeded by a regular ball fight. The following exciting account announces the fact:

Cock Fight.—Bowie of Fire Company, No 11, Lafayette,—A Cock Fight will take place on Sunday, the 11th inst., at the well known house of the subscriber. As the entire proceeds are for the benefit of the Lafayette Fire Company, a full attendance is solicited. Anon Inman

Church and State.—The Hon and Rev Mr Colquit, Senator in Congress, from Georgia, was announced to preach at the Washington Methodist Church, on Sunday so. The Express says. At home, he has been in the habit of preach a sermon, try a case a court, an advocate, sit on a conference, marry a couple, christen a child, and make a speech—all between sunrise and bed time, in one day!

When you incline to drink rum, fill the glass half with water. Then, at the worst, there will be £100,000 more money in our country. [Franklin

The privileges of the press produce some outrageous abuses; but there are no trifling, they be advantages, that may be reduced to the three words. It is better that people should be forever as ignorant as brutes, than they should sometimes be turbulent

The February 7, 1844 issue of the Warsaw Message.

Courtesy of the Illinois State Historical Library.

Mekuska's brow, so high and proud,
Has down to earth been lowly bow'd–
Mekuska's harp is broken.
With his hands calmly prest
And his eyes set in rest
On the sapphire-glowing West,
His last mournful song was spoken.

Afar, in the deep still forest glade,
'Neath the wide-spreading beech-tree's shade,
He's lain him down to perish:
And through the silent air,
From those lips, once so fair,
There breathes a moving pray'r,
That the Poet-God will care
For the Harp he so wildly did cherish.[9]

Gregg used Indian subject matter to convey a Christian sense of dependence on God. The "Harp" is metaphorical for the spirit of the Indian singer, broken but hoping for the restorative power of the "Poet-God." In short, like all poems about Indians published before the Civil War, "Me-kus-ka's Harp is Broken" does not reflect the actual consciousness of the red man, but rather, provides a romanticized conception that reveals the poet's own values.

Gregg's final prose items in the "Original Compositions" collection, four "Letters from the Upper Mississippi," were written in August and September of 1839. Each is addressed "To the Editor of the Cincinnati Chronicle." The first is entirely devoted to criticizing the Illinois Internal Improvement program. Of the legislators who developed it, he says, "Nothing but the most bare-faced bargain and corruption–*log-rolling*, as it is called in the West–among a most corrupt set of legislators, could have forced the system through, as it is, with all its deformity. Every paper town in the state wanted a Rail Road–'If *we* can not get *ours*, we will vote against the system–give *us* what *we* want, and we will support it.' This is the manner in which the system was got up. . . ."[10] Although not opposed to the development of the state, he urges that the current Internal Improvement program be abolished.

His second letter in the series has several subjects, including market prices in Warsaw and the transporting of freight up the Mississippi River in low water. Of the latter, he says, "Navigation is, however, not suspended above the [Des Moines] Rapids–there being a few boats that ply between the Rapids and Galena, taking in their freight at the head, to which it is carried from the foot (a distance of twelve miles) in Keels, drawn by horses."[11] In other words, the few riverboats that went beyond the Rapids unloaded their cargo near Warsaw, traveled the Rapids empty to avoid running aground while the cargo was transported by horse-drawn keelboats, and then were re-loaded at the head of the Rapids and proceeded north. The difficulty and expense of this operation made Warsaw the northern

terminus of travel for most steamboats.

The third of Gregg's "Letters from the Upper Mississippi" deals with an Iowa-Missouri boundary dispute, the locus of which was the area across the river from Warsaw. The final letter briefly describes Iowa City and the beginning of land sales at that location.

During 1841 Gregg obtained a position as Clerk for the Corporation of Warsaw. His ad in the *Warsaw Signal*, which had replaced the *Western World*, indicates that he would "attend to opening and posting Books, and drawing Deeds, Books, and other instruments of writing."[12] Thus, in a frontier town that already had a newspaper but was short of people with writing ability, Gregg found a useful position. Records indicate that he was the tax assessor for Warsaw at the same time.[13] Also, during 1841 he organized the Warsaw Library Association–one of the earliest libraries in Illinois–and became the town's first librarian. A newspaper notice to the stockholders (who were the only citizens permitted to borrow books, although anyone could read them at the library location) describes the institution:

> The Trustees of the Warsaw Library Association take pleasure in informing the stockholders of the Institution that they have procured the Rail Road office for their use–and that they are fitting up in connexion with it a READING ROOM, which will be open in a few days, well supplied with newspapers.
>
> The room will be open each day (Sundays excepted) after the hour of five o'clock P.M., at which time stockholders wishing to receive or exchange books will be waited upon by the Librarian for that purpose. Ladies and gentlemen of the village, and strangers sojourning among us, are respectfully invited to visit it.[14]

The Warsaw Library Association was not the only community-improvement organization that Gregg helped to found in 1841. Along with residents like Mark Aldrich, a member of the Illinois legislature, and Thomas Sharp, editor of the *Warsaw Signal*, Gregg organized the Warsaw Washingtonian Society, which held occasional meetings to promote the cause of temperance.[15] His contribution to that movement would reach a high point in the 1850s with the publication of his Warsaw *Temperance Crusader*.

Undoubtedly, Gregg was becoming well acquainted with Sharp at this time because of their common interest in temperance and newspaper publishing. Sharp was also a trustee of the Warsaw Library Association. A former teacher in Pennsylvania and lawyer in Quincy, he was only twenty-two when he arrived in Warsaw and took over the local newspaper in 1840.[16] Not long afterward, Gregg placed a couple of his previously published poems in the *Warsaw Signal*, and he began writing a series called "Brief Biographies of Eminent Americans," which included articles on poet Joel Barlow, novelist Charles Brockden Brown, and less well known figures. Sharp was probably glad to have those contributions, for he,

like Gregg, was committed to the idea that newspapers should bring educational and cultural material to their readers. He was later elected Mayor of Warsaw for several terms, served as president of the local school board, and founded three other newspapers, two in Warsaw and one in Carthage. After serving for a number of years as a justice of the peace, he was also elected Hancock County Judge. His first wife died in 1879, and afterward he married Anna Lawton Hewitt, a widow who was the youngest sister of Sarah Gregg. Hence, the two men eventually became brothers-in-law.

By 1841 the Mormons had been at nearby Nauvoo for two years, during which time Joseph Smith had used his influence as leader of the ever-increasing Latter Day Saints voting bloc to gain whatever political favors the Whigs and Democrats might dispense, including a city charter that placed him at the head of his own militia. At the same time, there were unanswered charges against Smith in Missouri, where the Mormons had become embroiled in a conflict and were brutally driven out. This situation, coupled with widespread reports of Mormon theft, negative reaction to the closed, hierarchical, and theocratic community at Nauvoo, and fear that the Saints might gain political control of the county, led Sharp to make his *Warsaw Signal* the voice of opposition to the Mormons. In the spring of 1841, he wrote an editorial in which he revealed that the basis for his opposition was the apparent threat posed by the Mormons to America's democratic political system: "We believe that they have the same rights as other religious bodies possess, and ought to be protected in the just and proper exercise of these rights. . . . On religious questions, it [the *Signal*] is and shall remain neutral; but it is bound to oppose the concentration of political power in a religious body, or in the hands of a few individuals."[17] In the summer of that year, he led the drive for an Anti-Mormon convention, at which local Whigs and Democrats united to defeat Mormon political candidates. Because of a rapidly growing population at Nauvoo, this was the last time that non-Mormons won an election in Hancock County until after the Mormons were forced to leave several years later.

All of this undoubtedly had an impact on Gregg, at least to the point where he saw the need for close scrutiny of Smith and his followers and the importance of maintaining one newspaper in the county that was not under Mormon control (the two others published in the early 1840s were at Nauvoo). In the summer of 1841 he wrote to Russell, giving his views on the Prophet, and in response his friend–who had also seen issues of the *Warsaw Signal*–cautioned him about unintentionally exciting a mob against the Mormons through the influence of that newspaper.[18] Gregg evidently replied that he had nothing to do with the *Signal's* editorials, for in a subsequent letter, Russell refers to "the war upon the Mormons in the 'Signal'" by "Sharp & Co."–revealing that he had been corrected about the source of that paper's growing anti-Mormon commentary.[19]

Like most other Hancock County and Illinois residents, Gregg was scandalized in 1842 when Smith was accused by a former confidant, John C. Bennett, of using his position as religious and civic leader to seduce Mormon women. And he became increasingly alarmed by the Prophet's mixing of religion,

politics, and military leadership. The problem that developed for Gregg was how to oppose Smith without promoting the violence that Russell had warned against.

While the Mormon controversy was developing, the Greggs' family responsibilities increased significantly. The birth of their first child, Mary, on May 16, 1842, meant that Sarah could no longer contribute to their income by teaching. Also, the death of Sarah's father in April placed the Greggs at the head of the Lawton family in Hancock County. They took in Sarah's youngest sister, nineteen-year-old Anna.[20]

When the *Signal* ceased publication late in 1842, Gregg acquired the press and launched the *Warsaw Message*, in partnership with a man named Skinner. They labeled it "An Agricultural, Political, and Commercial Gazette," and they referred, in the same issue, to their poverty and the need for an immense effort on their part if the *Message* was to succeed. Politically, the newspaper supported the Whigs, and it was noted for a strong emphasis on local matters, including the controversial Mormon issue. As was common on the frontier, the press was also used for job printing of all kinds–an important means of supplementing the owners' income. However, Skinner soon sold his interest to William Y. Patch, whose connection with the *Message* was also brief. Undoubtedly, there was not much profit in the venture.

During the fall of 1843, Gregg revealed just how difficult his financial situation was by issuing an appeal to those who, short of cash, had agreed to pay him in kind: "Those persons who have promised to bring us in payment the various kinds of produce, are reminded of their promise. We shall need them from this time forward, and shall refuse no marketable article at a fair price. Wood is particularly needed."[21] He asked subscribers to pay for the next volume in advance, if possible, to help him make a $500 payment on the printing equipment (which cost $1,200 altogether), but the response was not large enough for him to meet that obligation.

By September of 1843, Gregg was operating the newspaper by himself. Among his contributions to the *Message* was a series entitled "Western Poets and Poetry" that included articles on the most noted poets of his home state, William D. Gallagher and Otway Curry, as well as one on Illinois poet John Howard Bryant, the youngest brother of William Cullen Bryant. He also published a three-part series entitled "The Science and Progress of Government" by "Cleon"–which may have been his own pseudonym. The subject of intelligent government was of continual interest to Gregg. Agriculture was also, and he commonly presented articles for farmers, some of which were reprinted from the subsequently famous *Prairie Farmer* newspaper that was launched in Chicago during the same year.

Gregg also vigorously covered the growing local opposition to the Mormons. For example, his article entitled "Great Meeting of Anti-Mormons" states the views of those who stood against Smith and his followers, and another contribution, "The Last Case at Nauvoo," relates one non-Mormon's abortive attempt to secure justice in the Nauvoo court.[22] As the evidence pointing to Smith's desire

for political power and the functioning of Nauvoo as a sort of city-state designed to protect Mormon interests at all cost began to accumulate, some non-Mormons started to talk about violent solutions to perceived injustices. In response to that rising vigilante spirit, Gregg wrote an editorial entitled "The Mormon Question." On the one hand, he declared that he despised "the whole system of Mormonism" and was especially opposed to the political aspect, "which assumes to control the rights and liberties of the citizen–which sets itself up as law, in the place of the laws of the State," but on the other hand, he urged a lawful approach to the problem: "Let it suffice for the present to say that *our* remedy must be a peaceable one–a remedy that will not interfere with the Majesty and Supremacy of the Law! We can advocate no measure of redress that does not carry along with it the doctrine of Obedience to the Laws, from the beginning to the end."[23] Because Gregg's view was firmly rooted in a respect for the law, he disliked both the apparent subversion of the law by the Mormons and the talk of vigilante solutions by the non-Mormons. He was an advocate of procedural democracy at a time when many on the frontier–including Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith (who later destroyed the printing press of his Nauvoo critics) and Anti-Mormon editor Thomas Sharp (who later incited local citizens to violence against the Mormons)–regarded the law as secondary to their own sense of what was right.[24]

Because of continued financial difficulties, Gregg decided to reorganize his newspaper and issue the second volume as *The Prairie Message and Hancock and McDonough County Advertiser*, to be published simultaneously at Warsaw and Macomb (the McDonough County seat). In cooperation with a new partner, printer William Head, he issued a broadside late in 1843 that contained the Prospectus of the publication. It indicated that they were soliciting patronage from those who were alarmed by the reported activities of Smith and his associates: "In local matters–especially on the absorbing question of Mormon Dictation and Tyranny–it will firmly maintain its old position: advocating, with all the zeal of which we are capable, the just rights and interests of the Old Citizens, and exposing . . . the crimes, villainies, and dangers of that irresponsible and growing power at Nauvoo. . . ."[25] However, the Warsaw-Macomb publication never appeared, and so the *Message* limped along until it finally ceased operation on February 7, 1844.

The final issues of the *Message* were filled with matters relating to the Mormon controversy. In "Great Excitement at Carthage" Gregg reported that a posse of Mormons had arrested a citizen at Carthage, an action that incensed the residents of that town. Again, Gregg appealed to the non-Mormons for restraint and obedience to the law: "It is to be hoped that our citizens will exercise moderation in these scenes of strife–and on all occasions, make it a permanent duty to support the supremacy of the law. Let others disobey the law, and receive the consequences; but the Anti-Mormon party should ever make the law their shield and their hope."[26] In a subsequent article, "The Affair at Carthage," Gregg gave more details about the occurrence–which proved to be less of an affront against justice–and he objected to the tendency of people to provide misinformation.[27]

At the end of January, 1844, an individual who used the pseudonym "Farm-

er's Guard'' wrote a letter to the editor of the *Message* in which he complained that the Mormons were thieves and suggested that expulsion of the group from the county was the solution. Gregg's response, printed on the same page, was a vigorous denunciation of the idea. He pointed out that all residents of Nauvoo, half of whom were children, did not deserve punishment, but all would suffer under ''such odious–such fearful doctrines!'' And Gregg again asserted that any redress for grievances must be within the law: ''We will go as far as any one, in bringing the real criminals to justice, by the force of the LAW; beyond this we cannot go!''[28] He closed his response by warning the non-Mormons that public opinion–hitherto sympathetic to the county residents outside Nauvoo–would turn against them if they resorted to violence: ''One word more. The verdict of the American People will ever be against those who resort to force to effect their purposes.'' The comment was prophetic, as demonstrated by the public reaction to Smith's assassination five months later.

Unfortunately, the same page of the *Message* announced that next week's issue would be the last and that Thomas Sharp would be re-establishing the *Warsaw Signal*. The replacement of Gregg, who deplored many aspects of the Mormon presence but advocated restraint and redress within the law, by Sharp, who would later encourage mob action, in the editorial office of Hancock County's only non-Mormon newspaper was one of the most fateful events of the Mormon sojourn in Illinois. The kind of material that appeared in the last issue of the *Message*, ''Buckeye's Lamentation for Want of More Wives'' (a satirical poem, probably by disaffected Mormon William Law, that accused Smith of lechery) and ''Another Mormon Outrage'' (a letter by Alex Sympson, detailing his arrest by Smith without due cause) showed that public discontent was growing.[29] Conditions were ripe for violence, and after Smith and his associates destroyed an opposition newspaper in May, Sharp stirred the morally outraged, politically defeated, and legally frustrated public of Warsaw, Carthage, and other communities to action against the Mormon Prophet.

4

Rock Island, and Warsaw Again

By March 23, 1844, Gregg had moved to Rock Island, where he worked as the Associate Editor of the *Upper Mississippian*, a Whig newspaper edited by Daniel Crist, until October of that year. At that time, Rock Island was an active county seat and river town of about 1,000 people. It had been established and incorporated in 1841, superseding the earlier village of Stephenson at that location. The year of Gregg's arrival was the beginning of a great period of growth for the entire Rock River Valley area, and so Rock Island would be more than five times as large by the Civil War. It was by far the most populous and bustling community that he had lived in since leaving Ohio.

The brief residence of the Greggs in Rock Island was marked by tragedy, for in July their only child, Mary, died of an unnamed disease. She was two years old. The impact of this loss upon the young couple is reflected in a sorrowful poem that Gregg wrote seventeen years later, "Mary–A Heart History."[1] However, on December 10 of that year, a second daughter, Eva, was born at Warsaw. The Greggs' last child, Stella, was born on August 24, 1849, at the same location.

Because Gregg was in Rock Island during the spring and summer of 1844, he was separated from developments in the Mormon Conflict, including the killing of Joseph and Hyrum Smith at the Carthage Jail in June. However, he was in touch with several people in Hancock County during that time. Among them was Francis Higbee, one of the editors of the Nauvoo *Expositor*, which was about to be launched in May. Higbee made it clear that his newspaper would provide a "complete expose of his [the Prophet's] *Mormon Seragio*, or *Nauvoo Harem*–; and his unparalleled and unheard of attempts at seduction."[2] He also agreed to exchange papers with the *Upper Mississippian*. Sarah Gregg made a visit to Carthage a few weeks before the murders, and she wrote to her husband from there, telling him about the state of military readiness among the non-Mormons.[3] At the end of June, James Gregg wrote a brief letter to his brother, informing him of the violence at the Carthage Jail, and two months afterward, Franklin Worrell wrote about subsequent political events.[4] Worrell (Gregg's brother-in-law, married to Anna Lawton) had been in command of the Carthage militia unit that was guarding the jail when the murders occurred. He was accused by some of cooperating with the mob that stormed the jail, and during the next month (September) he was killed by a pro-Mormon posse headed by Sheriff Backenstos. (The sheriff was indicted for the murder but not convicted.) Others probably also corresponded with Gregg, but these are the only letters from his period of residence in Rock Island that are known to have survived.

Gregg naturally drew upon his knowledge of the situation in Hancock County

to write occasional articles about the Mormon Conflict for the *Upper Mississippian*. Perhaps the most significant of those appeared on September 7, in response to a letter by Mormon apostate Wiliam Law, who had recently settled in Hampton, Rock Island County–to the dislike of some in that community. Law indicated that he and his brother Wilson now disapproved of Mormonism, as practiced at Nauvoo, but mentioned that they had previously suffered religious persecution. In the "Remarks" that followed the article, Gregg took issue with the latter comment, presenting his own view of the basis for non-Mormon opposition to the Saints:

> Mr. Law and his associates know now–if they never knew before–that religious persecution had nothing to do with the disturbances in Hancock County. He knows that, had the people of Nauvoo seen proper to fall down and worship their prophet, or their twelve oxen, as they did the golden calf of old, they might have done so in perfect security, and without molestation from their gentile neighbors.
>
> But Mr. Law must remember that he and his present associates have done much to offend the old citizens: They have for years banded with their unprincipled leader; encouraged him in all his crimes and villainies, by their presence and countenance, if not by their advice; and, when endeavors have been made to bring him to justice, for his offenses against the laws of his country, they have aided to thwart those endeavors to the utmost. They have sanctioned–or at least acquiesced in–the high-handed acts of the city council, in its abuses of the Habeas Corpus, and other infractions of the law. And when Gen. Bennett (from good or evil motives, we care not) came out and exposed the secret villainies of these people, they [the Law brothers] joined with the rest in denouncing Gen. Bennett as a falsifier and imposter.[5]

In short, Gregg felt that Smith and his associates–among whom William Law had been one of the most influential–had little respect for the law or ethical behavior where their own interests were involved.

By late 1844 the Greggs were back in Warsaw, for Thomas had quit his position with the *Upper Mississippian* in early October. There is no evidence to indicate why he decided to return to Hancock County, but the murder of Franklin Worrell at the hands of a pro-Mormon posse in September may have been one reason, for his death left Sarah's sister without a husband. Moreover, by that time, Anna Worrell had a baby, and the Greggs undoubtedly felt a strong sense of family responsibility. Also, the presence of many friends in the Hancock County area, as well as the apparent end to Mormon control of the county following the Carthage murders, were probably important factors that influenced their return.

At the same time, Gregg may have felt that he could help bring about an end to the violence between Mormons and non-Mormons that had erupted after the Prophet's death. In an 1845 letter to Brigham Young, who had been successful in the post-assassination struggle for leadership of the Church, Gregg said he was

convinced that "there are men of influence enough in this and the surrounding counties, who can and will put a full stop to all the violence" if Young revealed his intention to leave Illinois the following spring.[6] Of course, Gregg undoubtedly hoped the Mormons would leave, thus removing the threat to a free society that he saw in their theocratic system, but his contact with Young was clearly intended to bring the violence to a stop and encourage a peaceful exodus. His effort is especially notable because, to a man without his commitment to peaceful solutions, Franklin Worrell's death might have provided a motive for the encouragement of further violence against the Mormons.

Not long after returning to Warsaw, Gregg–who sensed the historical importance of the Mormon Conflict–began to gather information from various people who had been involved or had watched the events develop. In an 1846 letter to Colonel John J. Hardin, who had commanded the soldiers dispatched by Governor Ford to keep the peace, Gregg remarked tht he was seeking information for a "history of the Mormons in Illinois."[7] He even wrote to the Prophet's widow, Emma, asking for historical papers and recollections of events at Nauvoo. (She remained behind when the vast majority of Mormons were forced to leave the state early in 1846, following conflict that had continued off and on since the murders at Carthage.) She replied but did not provide him with any information.[8]

Although he did not produce an extensive study of the Mormons in Illinois until his *History of Hancock County* appeared in 1880, Gregg did write a brief account of the conflict in a historical publication about the county that appeared in 1846. It was a large broadside entitled "A Descriptive, Statistical, and Historical Chart of the County of Hancock" that provided information, in several columns of newspaper print, about the towns and history of that portion of Illinois. The 10,000-word sheet was printed at the *Signal* office. Although limited in scope, Gregg's "Historical Chart" was the first county history ever published in Illinois. Newspaper editors who took notice of it commonly remarked that other counties ought to produce similar historical works, but evidently none did. (Book-length county histories did not come along until after the Civil War.) Gregg also published a map of the county along with it, but that has not survived.[9]

This little-known account of the Mormon Conflict includes information about the first Anti-Mormon Convention in the summer of 1841. In fact, it reprints two of the resolutions from that convention, which support Gregg's earlier assertion that religious differences did not motivate the non-Mormons of Hancock County to oppose the Saints:

> Resolved, That with the peculiar religious opinions of the people calling themselves Mormons, or Latter Day Saints, we have nothing to do–being at all times perfectly willing that they shall remain in the full possession of all the rights and privileges which our constitution and laws guarantee and other citizens enjoy.
>
> Resolved, That in standing up as we do to oppose the influence which these people have obtained and are likely to obtain, in a political

> capacity, over our fellow citizens and their liberties, we are guided only by a desire to defend ourselves against a despotism, the extent and consequences of which we have no means of ascertaining.[10]

Concerning Smith's use of his church leadership to exercise political control over his followers, and thereby obtain special favors from Illinois politicians, Gregg says, "Smith, knowing that he had control of the whole vote of his church, and finding that it was so much sought after by politicians, put it up in the market, and ever after gave where he expected the most in return. In the next legislature, both parties vied with each other in conferring benefits upon the Mormons, and hence the reason for their obtaining such liberal charters–charters containing unusual provisions, and which in the hands of ignorant and designing men are extremely dangerous." (Well over a century later, scholars of the Mormon Conflict reached essentially the same conclusion about Smith's relationship to Illinois politics.[11]) Gregg then refers to the Nauvoo City Council's use of habeas corpus in 1843 to release Smith from the custody of Missouri officials (who had charged him with conspiring with O. P. Rockwell to kill Governor Boggs) and to the Council's destruction of the *Expositor* in 1844, as well as to the subsequent murders at Carthage and other acts of violence. Hence, the "Historical Chart" emphasizes that Smith's desire for political influence, coupled with Mormon abuse of the law through unwarranted application of their city charter, led to the antagonism and mob action of 1844 and 1845.

Another interesting feature of the "Historical Chart" is that Gregg included information about some towns that never really existed except on paper, having been planned by land speculators during the mid-1830s, when hundreds of such towns were laid out in Illinois. As one might imagine, three of them were located along the Mississippi: Des Moines City, laid out north of Montebello by Dr. Adolphus Allen; Hartford, laid out several miles north of Nauvoo by James M. Campbell, and Commerce City, which received the following description:

> Among the many paper towns, ushered into life and beauty by the expansion of 1836-37, Commerce City may be ranked the first. And a splendid affair it was. Churches, not excelled by the costly edifices of New York and Philadelphia–stores, equal in magnitude to the most extensive in New Orleans–Colleges and Universities, second only to Yale and Harvard–parks, avenues, and public grounds were scattered in rich profusion over its broad surface–on paper–and all that was wanted to give reality to the picture, was the city itself. The City flourished in 1837, and was ushered into existence in April of that year, by Horace B. Hotchkiss and John Gillett, two speculators from Connecticut. The most expensive part of the operation was the lithographing of the churches, Town Halls and other public buildings, with which the embryo city was graced. It is located on section 35, next to its humble namesake, Commerce Village. Both were eventually swallowed up in the great and far-famed city of Nauvoo.

Gregg was evidently thinking of Nauvoo as a community designed to "swallow up" whatever was nearby when he quipped, later in the "Historical Chart," that "Gnaw-You" would have been a more appropriate name for the town. He was, in fact, fascinated with community names–as his "City of Humbug" satire indicated. He also provides information about the origin of the names of most Hancock County towns, including Jo Duncan, another speculation community–which was evidently named for spite: "This town was laid out on the southeast quarter of section 35, township six north, five west, in October, 1836, by Robt. Miller, Isaac N. Morris, and David W. Mathews. It is said to have received its cognomen from the fact that Joseph Duncan, Ex-Governor of the State, and a town speculator, wouldn't take an interest in it."

While Gregg was gathering information for his "Historical Chart," he was also planning to launch another newspaper. In February of 1845, he issued in various Illinois newspapers a proposal "for Publishing at Keokuk, Iowa Territory, a new Whig paper, to be entitled the IOWA MORNING STAR."[12] Although Gregg always supported the Whigs, he avoided the vicious castigation of opposition candidates and legislators that was common in the pre-Civil War press, preferring to concentrate on advocating the principles that his party stood for. Hence, in his proposal he mentioned that the *Morning Star* would advocate "The Constitution as it is" (i.e., a conservative interpretation of the Constitution) and would "avoid that party violence which characterizes so many papers of the day." He also indicated that the paper would focus on farming, commercial, and river news–and thus, would be concerned with the economic development of the region. Moreover, it would be "an instructive and interesting FAMILY PAPER"–that is, an educative, literary periodical–and to that end, he would make it "a Salmagundi for all kinds of palates; in which the grave and the gay–the light and the solid–the essay–the story–the poem–and the matter-of-fact will each be blended with a careful hand." This proposal reveals much about the nature of newspapers in the early Midwest, for like the *Iowa Morning Star*, most of them carried little that modern readers would regard as "news."

Gregg intended to start publication as soon as the Mississippi River was open to navigation in the spring, but the first number did not appear until April 24. The *Morning Star* was offered to the public at $1.50 per year, or three cents an issue, but Gregg never received the patronage that he had expected, and his second issue, dated May 1, was the last.[13] The short-lived *Iowa Morning Star* was the first newspaper published in Keokuk, which had less than 500 residents at the time.

Apparently, the Greggs resided in that town for only a few weeks, after which they returned to Warsaw. Thomas was evidently not in the newspaper business until January of 1847, when he became the Associate Editor of Thomas Sharp's *Warsaw Signal*. After the latter left the paper in May, Gregg took control. As in his other journalistic ventures, he frequently printed local history material, agricultural articles, and literary works–along with political news and opinion, advertisements, and human interest items. For example, the May 29 issue began

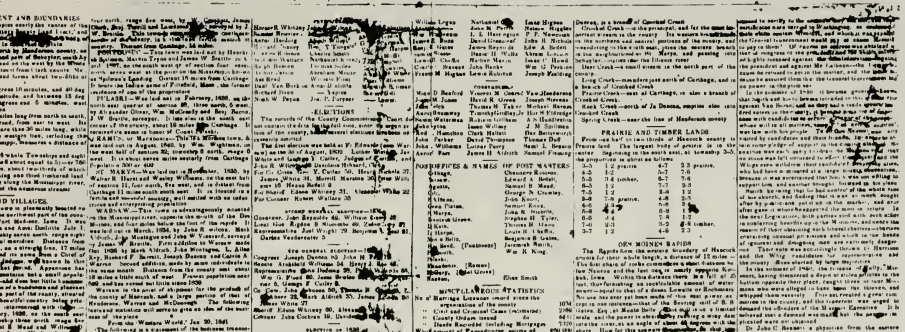
Eva Gregg.

Stella Gregg.

A DESCRIPTIVE, STATISTICAL AND HISTORICAL CHART OF THE COUNTY OF HANCOCK.

PREPARED AND PUBLISHED BY TH GREGG—WARSAW, ILLINOIS.—FEB. 1, 1846.

[SECOND EDITION—REVISED AND CORRECTED BY THE AUTHOR.]



The upper part of Gregg's 1846 "Historical Chart."

John Hay, at age nineteen.

ILLINOIS TEMPERANCE CRUSADER

A CAMPAIGN PAPER

DEVOTED TO THE LEGAL PROHIBITION OF THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

"Moral Suasion for the Victim—Legal Suasion for the Victimizer."

VOLUME 1. WARSAW, ILLINOIS, MAY 15, 1854. NUMBER 6.

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Th. Gregg, Publisher.

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From the Freeman's Adjunct.

TEMPERANCE SONG.

Air—"Evening Bell."

Echoing's proper, in a whisper
Sad and low—
Tells of mourning, wail and woe,
Bitter sighing—our hopes dying,
Tear, we hear;
Where this desolation drows?

Men unfeeling, strong drink dealing
Unto man,
Cause this misery all for gain.
Yet a healing is revealing
For this pain—
'Tis the blessed law of Maine.

Voices pleading, prayers ascending
To God's throne
Soon shall make this law our own.

LILLY VALE.

Washtenaw, April, 1854.

COMMUNICATIONS.

[For the Temperance Crusader.]

THE MAINE LAW:

Its Reasonableness, Necessity and Practicability.

Being the substance of a Discourse delivered in Warsaw, on Sunday Evening, Feb. 26, by

REV. STEPHEN A. CHESE.

2. A Prohibitory Law is necessary.

It is necessary in a sense that morals, happiness, property, health and life, are necessary; for the very existence of the liquor traffic inevitably brings destruction to these blessings. There is no concord between them, and they cannot coexist. What folly to say, 'let a man use it without abusing it,' and make this no argument for non-prohibition, when the daily facts which we all witness declare it impossible; when the universal experience of years demonstrates that the traffic injures intemperance and drunkenness beyond the possibility of failure; and that so long as intoxicating liquors are exposed to sale and can be bought, so long there will be drunkards and misery, and crime, and wretchedness, and ruin. Has it not been in course of trial for the last thirty years or more, to reconcile these two things: To use and not abuse? To effect this, no efforts have been spared, no schemes left untried, no sacrifice seemingly been wanting; and with what success? Has any method been discovered whereby the traffic can be continued and the evils be restrained? What has the whole temperance movement accomplished, that has been struggling with untiring perseverence for nearly the last half century, in every town and city throughout the Union? Has it suppressed the traffic or its evils? Has it materially diminished them? I confess that I have not seen the happy results arising from Temperance Societies that many think they have seen; but I say there only to cry of the measure to the end. After all the mighty efforts of the temperance army for so long a time, the traffic continues nearly or quite unabated. Our statistics show no decrease, and the blighting curse is still in its wonted vigor among us.

How strange, in the face of these things, to hear people still urging on for moral suasion as the remedy, when it is just what has so long been tried, in all its varied ways and powers, to little or no purpose; when it is daily proved before our eyes to be totally incompetent to meet the case.

It is not that liquor drinkers and dealers are not persuaded of the evil; it is not that they stand in need of persuasion or conviction. They already know; they are already convinced; but they cannot or will not act according to their knowledge of convictions. The liquor dealer knows that he deals out misery and ruin to his fellow creatures, but the love of gain is too powerful to restrain him. The liquor drinker knows he is drinking a dose of poison, but he has not sufficient strength of resolution and virtue to let it alone. What he would, he does not; what he would not, that he does.' When he would refrain, this cursed evil is ever present with him, and though fully persuaded that happiness and life are at stake, yet he cannot resist the power of habit and temptation. Reputation and friends, and property and life—disgrace, poverty, beggary and death; have no power over the already persuaded inebriate! He will suffer the loss of all things for the momentary gratification. Where has all the power of moral suasion been so brought to bear as upon the rum drinker? What occasion could so bring it into exercise? There is not only the ruin to himself of all things temporal, spiritual and intellectual; but the more mighty influence that he is making others partakers of his misery and shame; a lovely family, a tender wife's entreaties and tears and destitution; his own children's cries for bread: where, I say, the moral suasion been so brought to bear, thoroughly tried and proved, in the very case itself for which it was ordained, and all in vain. We might as easily persuade the wolves and wolves devouring lamb, as the drunkard man to refrain, when the temptation is continually before him, when he is set on every street to entice him, when he daily comes in contact with the object of his fearful passion. It must be put out of his sight out of his reach, as we would a snake from a manger. Nothing less will effect the object. As a drunkard I asked the men in Baltimore to pledge themselves 'What think you of the Maine Law?' 'Give me that, and I shall be glad to have signed your pledge.' Or and I may say to drunkards, but only to bring them in mind, 'only agree to irritate him and make him more rampant.

Their contents, the drinks temptation, and then, but not till then, [illegible] a sober man." Is not [illegible] and [illegible] drunkenness? Must it not compel itself to every [illegible] and only effectual remedy?

Instead of prohibition, some are still in favor of trying to substitute regulation, as in the license system. The measure, the evil worse than before. It does not in the least diminish the traffic. The liquor seller would as soon pay $100 as $50 for a license, for it is the miserable consumer who pays the tariff. The whisky drinker never hesitates about buying because the price is enough higher to pay for the license.

But especially does it aggravate the evil of drunkenness, inasmuch as it throws the protection of the law over it, and gives it a certain popularity.

The license law sanctions, aids and abets this monster of iniquity. It upholds and guards it, and hides its deformity. It effectually hinders every attempt of moral suasion. It keeps the whisky seller from making into that depth of contempt which he deserves. Nothing has so nourished up intemperance, and given it respectability, extension and aggravation, as the license law.

If the liquor traffic be right, let no man be prohibited. If it is wrong, shall a few dollars and cents buy the privilege? Should our legislature pass an act that any man might take out a license to steal or murder, for the sum of $50 or $100, we should revolt and protest at the very thought. Yet we may reasonably believe that such an act would not prove so destructive to property and life, as the license of the liquor traffic. It is a license to kill bodies and souls. It is a license to destroy peace and happiness and morals, property and life inestimable, and every misery and poverty, pauperism and crime, desolation and death throughout the world.

The liquor traffic is like Leviathan, that cannot be captured with a hook, or least no mighty to be bound with a rope or straw. He never was, nor can be tamed. He never was nor can be subdued, or kept within any rules or curse or prison. No barriers can hold him; he is strong enough to break them like a serpent and sting like an adder and work desolation; and instead of vainly trying any longer to tame or restrain him, I say "Kill Him! Kill him! Death alone can conquer him. But lastly: It is as I that this cannot be done, that this is the very point of the difficulty, that the beast is too mighty to be slain; and as they are [illegible] to fire a few shots at him and [illegible] to tangle him with threads, which again, but only to bre[illegible] killed, [illegible] more or less lives [illegible] [illegible] would have to see him die. They would rather defend him than help kill him. Many are, however, incredulous like the school boy, who [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

a series of historical articles entitled "Hancock County," and soon afterward, a column devoted to short stories, "Tales for the Million," and another that carried lyrics, "Original Poetry," appeared on page one. By the fall, a column labeled simply "Agricultural" (later the "Farmer's Corner") was a regular feature, and a series called "Towns in Hancock County"–which drew upon his "Historical Chart"–was launched.

As the title of the "Original Poetry" column suggests, Gregg encouraged local rhymsters to contribute, thus promoting literary activity in the area. Among the lyrics are a few of his own: "Winter Song," "December," and "Life's Voyage." The first is notable for its vigorous expression, achieved primarily through the use of verbs and participles, as the first ten lines demonstrate:

> Winter! winter! – here he comes!
> Roaring–freezing–blowing!
> Sounds of trumpets–muffled drums!
> Hailing–sleeting–snowing!
> Hoary winter! winter hoary!
> Famous both in song and story.
>
> Stop the crannies–chink the floor–
> Each humble dwelling warming;
> Stir the fire and shut the door,
> And never heed his storming. . . .[14]

"Winter Song" ends by celebrating the fireside, as Gregg makes the point that life's difficulties (represented metaphorically by the storm) can be overcome by family togetherness and good cheer. "December" is an even better poem, chiefly because of the successful contrast between the perspectives of youth and age, and the implied comparison (in stanza two) between the late fall of the year and the later years of the speaker's life:

> Hoary, frosty, drear December!
> Bleakest of the winter months!
> Very well do I remember
> How I loved to greet thee once.
> In my boyhood's happy hours–
> In my days of youthful prime–
> Then I loved thy sweeping tempests–
> Then I loved the winter time.
>
> Now that I am growing older,
> And the frosts of years appear,
> The current of my blood runs colder–
> Thy snows becoming still more drear.
> Let me escape thy chilling presence,
> Dreariest of the dreary months!

> I cannot greet thee as of yore,
> Or love thee as I loved thee once.[15]

The poem is dated "Banks of the Mississippi, December, 1847," and a headnote indicates that it first appeared in *The Hartford Nonpareil* in February of 1848. "Life's Voyage" is a mediocre religious lyric that appeared on August 6, 1851. It depicts life as a perilous ocean voyage to heaven.

Probably because Gregg could not locate (or produce) enough original poetry, he also started a column called "Gems from the Poets" that reprinted lyrics by eastern writers like Bryant, Poe, Whittier, Longfellow, and Holmes, along with works by such western authors as William D. Gallagher, Otway Curry, Alice Carey, and Phoebe Carey. While most of the short stories he published were also reprinted from newspaper and magazine exchanges, he did present a few original tales, including "Capt. Zach and the Lead Horse" (about the building of Fort Johnson, where Warsaw is located) by "An Old Ranger," and "Cenna: A Tale of the Early Settlement of Illinois" (about an Indian-white love affair at Kaskaskia) by "M. W. M." of Carthage.[16]

In 1848 Gregg also published literature in another periodical. It was a monthly magazine for young readers entitled *The Prairie Rose*. Although edited and printed at the *Signal* office, it was evidently supported (at least in part) by J. W. A. Neals and Company, the function of which is unknown. No copy has been located, but the first issue was in the possession of Hancock County historian Pearl Gordon Vestal twenty-five years ago, and she wrote a brief newspaper article about it. According to the front cover of the eight-page magazine, it was devoted to "Literature, Biography, Poetry, History, Moral Tales, &c."[17] The back cover offered a Prospectus: "It will be the design of the Prairie Rose to afford at an extremely low price and within the reach of all, a periodical in their own midst, for the Youth of this rapidly developing section of the West. . . . Its contents, original and selected, will be of such a character as will be calculated to entertain, instruct, and benefit the young." The first number contained items reprinted from eastern magazines, pseudonymous original materials, and sketches of early Illinois history by John Mason Peck. One of the short prose pieces, "Civilization and Barbarism," was by Gregg, who originally wrote it as part of his "Salmagundi" composition for the *Cincinnati Mirror* in 1835. Other unsigned items were probably by him as well. *The Prairie Rose*, like the earlier *Western Emigrant's Magazine*, may have been discontinued after the first issue.

At the end of 1847, Gregg announced that he had associated himself with John J. Miller, "an excellent practical printer," but twelve months later the Gregg-Miller partnership was dissolved.[18] Gregg then continued to publish the *Signal* by himself, changing the title to the *Warsaw Signal and Carthage Observer* during the early 1850s in an attempt to draw patronage from the county seat. Finally, after six years as editor of the *Signal*, he sold the newspaper in March of 1853 to Thomas Sharp, who changed the title to the *Warsaw Weekly Express*. Probably the main reason why the *Signal* had lasted for several years–longer than any other

newspaper edited by Gregg–was that Warsaw grew rapidly after the Mormons left the county, more than tripling its population between 1845 and the early 1850s, when it had 1,700 residents.

During his years at the helm of the *Warsaw Signal*, Gregg took an interest in Dr. Charles Hay's boy, John, who liked to spend his idle hours in the newspaper office. The youth also delivered papers for Gregg.[19] Since the latter was also a poet, he encouraged young Hay, whose literary aspirations were already developing. Moreover, he published some of Hay's juvenile lyrics, although their appearance under a pseudonym has so far made them impossible to identify.[20] Hay later became nationally famous with the publication of his Pike County Ballads, and he rose in government service to become Secretary of State under presidents McKinley and Roosevelt.

During the 1850s Gregg was involved in four Warsaw organizations, all of which he helped to found. One was the Warsaw Literary and Debating Society, which was organized in January of 1850.[21] The founding members included such intellectuals as Thomas Sharp, physician Charles Hay, and amateur geologist A. H. Worthen (the society's first president). In 1856 the state legislature granted a charter to the Warsaw Literary Association, as it was then called.[22] Two years later, Gregg and others founded the Hancock County Agricultural Society, and he became the organization's first secretary.[23] He was also a co-founder and secretary of two anti-liquor organizations, the Warsaw Division No. 142 of the Sons of Temperance and the Warsaw Maine Law Alliance.[24] Both were founded in 1854. (Sarah, an accomplished organizer herself, was head of the Star of Hope Union No. 50, Daughters of Temperance.) At this time aso, Gregg was active in promoting railroad connections for Warsaw, as well as a plank road, never completed, between Warsaw and Augusta (located in the eastern part of the county). Moreover, he served as a local agent for magazine subscriptions and books published in the East. Hence, he was a significant community leader whose devotion to the cultural development of Warsaw and Hancock County extended well beyond his work as a newspaper publisher.

By February 15, 1854, Gregg was editing the Warsaw *Temperance Crusader*, a bi-weekly publication that he labeled "A Campaign Paper, Devoted to the Legal Prohibition of the Liquor Traffic."[25] He had supported the anti-liquor movement since his arrival in Carthage during 1836, and more recently, he had printed occasional temperance poems and articles in the *Signal*. The opportunity to edit the *Temperance Crusader* arose through the rapid growth of the prohibition movement in Illinois, for its supporters wanted to promote the cause as widely as possible within the state. For that reason, perhaps, the newspaper's title was soon changed to the *Illinois Temperance Crusader*, and a low subscription price (fifty cents a year) was established.

Except for a few advertisements, each four-page issue was entirely devoted to articles, stories, and poems in support of temperance, such as "The Maine Law," "A Teetotaler's Story," and "Temperance Song," which appeared on the front pages of early issues. Gregg also included occasional letters to the editor.

In fact, the most interesting item found in the surviving issues of the *Crusader* is a "Letter from Plymouth" that describes a whiskey riot: "This place has recently been the scene of a Whiskey riot among the laborers on the railroad, in which one shanty was burned, an attempt to fire another, other property destroyed, human life endangered, the sanctity of the Sabbath invaded by calling out a posse of citiziens to arrest the rioters, &c., &c. A two gallon jug of liquor was at the bottom of the whole affair."[26] That event was, of course, viewed as a perfect illustration of the detrimental effect of liquor upon society–as was the killing of a railroad worker in the same town shortly afterward, which was also reported in the *Crusader*:

> Murder at Plymouth.–There appears to be a Godless set of rowdies working on the railroad near Plymouth. A few weeks since we had a riot and robbery to record, as having taken place amongst the laborers on the Northern Cross Road, near that place, and now, we have to record a murder. The story is a short one. The Irish got on a spree; a row ensued, of course, and one of them ripped the bowels of another open with a butcher knife and stabbed him through the thigh. The murderer has been arrested and is now confined in the Carthage jail. Verily, whiskey is the most dangerous criminal that ever was allowed to run at large in any community.[27]

Within a few months, the *Temperance Crusader* achieved a circulation of about 1,700, mainly through the support of the Sons of Temperance. However, in the fall of 1854, just eight months after it had been launched, the *Crusader* was merged with a similar newspaper in Chicago, and so Gregg was again without an editorial position.[28] This marked the end of his newspaper work in Warsaw. The town's increasing German population, which would soon establish two breweries and a beer garden, was undoubtedly glad to see the *Crusader* discontinued. By the Civil War, there would also be three distilleries and a few saloons in town, and wine making would emerge as an important business as well. Hence, the Mississippi River community would not have been likely to achieve leadership in the temperance movement even if the newspaper had remained there.

Gregg's enthusiasm for the temperance cause was also not shared by John Hay, who later wrote a humorous poem based on the struggle against liquor in early Warsaw, entitled "The Pledge at Spunky Point." One of his most successful Pike County Ballads, and perhaps the most widely read anti-temperance poem of the century, it pokes fun at both committed drinkers and the temperance movement. By the time that poem appeared (1874), however, Gregg and Hay had been gone from Warsaw for several years.

After the *Temperance Crusader* failed, Gregg began to spend more time on another interest, fruit growing. He not only planted and tended fruit trees and plants of his own, but gathered information about what other horticulturalists were doing, both in Hancock County and elsewhere. During 1855 and 1856 he worked

on a book about fruit growing that was published in New York in 1857. *Fruit Culture for the Million* gives instructions to the novice on how to raise many kinds of fruits, including apples and grapes, which were popular in Hancock County.[29] But in spite of his success in this field, Gregg wanted to get back into the newspaper business, and an opportunity to do so was not long in coming.

5

Plymouth and Hamilton

In the spring of 1857 the Greggs moved to Plymouth, on the eastern edge of Hancock County, where Thomas edited that town's first newspaper, the *Plymouth Locomotive*. It was financially supported by the Plymouth Printing Association, a group of local citizens who were anxious to see the town grow. Among them was John H. Lawton, Sarah's younger brother, who played a key role by enticing his brother-in-law to start a newspaper in that community. Lawton was a newly established "Forwarding and Commission Merchant," as his ads in the *Locomotive* continually proclaimed, and he was perhaps the biggest town booster in Plymouth.

The first settlers had arrived in that vicinity (then called Round Prairie) in 1831, and the town was named and laid out in 1836, but it was still a mere village of a few hundred people when Gregg moved there more than twenty years later. The railroad (a branch of the Northern Cross) had come to Plymouth just two years earlier, amidst an upsurge of boosterism that was still evident when Gregg agreed to start the publication, and so he linked the two developments–railroad and newspaper–with his unusual title. As he explained in the Prospectus,

> This is a Railroad Age. Everything progresses at a speed hitherto unexampled in the history of the world. The Great West is on the march; her boundless Prairies are becoming peopled with an ever-active population–and resounding with the whistle of the steam engine–towns and villages are springing up and becoming cities. . . .
>
> Our own beautiful Prairie Village feels the new impulse, and is affected by the new order of things. The spirit of Progress is upon us–and among other wants which it has made manifest, is that of a Newspaper. And the institution has already come: The Capital has been subscribed–the Engine and fixtures procured–the Engineer engaged–and the Plymouth Locomotive is already upon the track, with a goodly number of passenger and freight cars in its train. The ticket office is open; pay your money and jump aboard![1]

The *Locomotive* was "Devoted to the Interests of the Farm and the Fireside," and as usual Gregg included local material, literary works, and agricultural (especially fruit growing) information among the newspaper's weekly contents. He also presented occasional memoirs of pioneer life by himself and others. An outstanding item of local history in the surviving issues is an article by "K." entitled "Recollections of Plymouth," which presents information about the first settlers who came to that area, based on an interview with one of them. It appeared on June

13, 1857. The same issue also carried an article by Gregg in which he urged that the public square be enclosed with trees, shrubs, and a fence, to enhance the beauty and property value of the town.[2]

In an effort to supplement his income, Gregg became a candidate for county school commissioner. During October he published a message "To the Voters of Hancock County," in which he said that he wanted "to elevate the character of our Common Schools" by employing competent teachers, erecting good school houses, and purchasing suitable textbooks.[3] Dedicated as he was to learning, Gregg might have been a good commissioner, but he was defeated by the incumbent, Benjamin F. Marsh, who had been the commissioner for more than twenty years.

In spite of its value to the community, the *Locomotive* did not attract enough income to induce Gregg to continue after several months. From the look of surviving issues, local businesses did advertise, but there were just not enough subscribers to make the newspaper profitable. Before the end of 1857, the *Locomotive* passed into the hands of A. H. Hahn, and it became permanently derailed in the following year, after the brief editorship of J. C. Runyon.

During the late fall of 1857 or winter of 1858 the Greggs moved to Hamilton, located four miles north of Warsaw on the Mississippi River. The first settler had come to that vicinity in 1832, but the town was not laid out until twenty years later. It was named for Artois Hamilton, the well-to-do Carthage businessman with whom Gregg had become acquainted in 1836. The former was one of the town's developers and, in 1857, owned the spacious Hamilton Hotel. In *The Dollar Monthly* for June, 1873, Gregg provided a rather humorous account of the naming and laying out of the "City of Hamilton":

> There is a legend that runneth in this wise: That in the years of the dim past, in the beginning of the embryo city that was to rival the then thriving village across the water [Keokuk, Iowa], a conclave of the proprietors was held to give the bantling a name. Of these proprietors we can only now name the following: Bryant Bartlett, who had supplied much of the hard labor and a good deal of the gas; Samuel Gordon, who had resided on the spot as child and man . . . and who furnished a goodly portion of the land; and Artois Hamilton, of Carthage, who was supposed to hold pretty considerable sized money-bags. Money, "the root of all evil," is also considered the root of some good, and in this case was regarded as "the one thing needful," so it was decided to give the new town the name of the holder of the aforesaid money-bags, in the hope that the honor might induce him to "shell out." Of course, other names were presented and duly discussed–as "Bartlett," "Gordon," "Rapids City," "East Keokuk," &c. But the question of finance outweighed all others, and it received the name it now bears.
>
> And Mr. H. did "shell out" for a time, and commendable efforts were made by all concerned to build up a city. But the fates were against them. . . . The city would not come. They planned, they strove,

> they gassed; they planted stakes, they ran streets and alleys; they laid out wharves and dykes. In their very desperation they invoked the aid of the Commonwealth, and its august Representatives at Springfield came to their aid, and passed an act compelling it to be a city at any rate–for, said they, the people will come to it afterwards. But, with an unpardonable lack of discernment and hard common sense, the people still stay away–and congregate in other places. And so he of the money-bags, long ago, seeing how things were going–or standing still, rather–shook the dust off his feet and left in disgust, and the city which once knew him so well, now knows him no more.[4]

At the time that Gregg and his family arrived, the town had a few hundred people, and it was about to be connected with the Mississippi and Wabash Railroad, running north from Warsaw along the river. Two years later, Hamilton was incorporated. Hence, it was growing, although not rapidly, and by the early 1870s–when Gregg launched *The Dollar Monthly*–it had about 1,200 residents.

The Greggs acquired a home at Seventh Street and Broadway, where Sarah conducted a private school, first by herself and then with the assistance of her daughter Eva.[5] They also bought a few acres on the north edge of town, where Thomas continued his horticultural pursuits. Except for one or two years in the mid-1860s, when they again lived in Warsaw, the Greggs spent the rest of their lives in Hamilton. During their later years, they resided in a modest home on north Seventh Street.[6]

The main reason for moving to Hamilton was the hope of launching a newspaper, and by May of 1858 Gregg had started to publish the *Hamilton Representative*. Although he did not mention himself in the 1873 article on Hamilton, Gregg was a staunch believer in the future growth of the community during its early years. In one issue of the *Representative*, he even predicted that Hamilton would have a population of 5,000 and a *daily newspaper* by 1862.[7] Thus, he still dreamed of achieving real success in journalism. The office where he labored to make that dream a reality was located on Broadway (the main street) "over Battell and Fetheringham's Agricultural Warehouses."[8]

Revealing again his conviction that newspapers should edify, Gregg proclaimed that the *Representative* was devoted "not to descriptions of bloody murders and horrible and revolting details of crime, which tend to corrupt and demoralize the mind; but such reading as will instruct, entertain, and enlighten the family circle."[9] As in the *Warsaw Signal* of the later 1840s, he had a series entitled "Tales for the Million," another called "Gems from the Poets," and a regular "Agricultural Affairs" column. Moreover, he printed several "Brief Biographical Sketches of American Literary Notables," most of which had first appeared in Sharp's *Signal* in 1841. Hence, the focus, the format, and even some of the content of the *Hamilton Representative* were derived from his earlier newspaper work.

His local material included a series entitled "Mormon History," which was

an expansion of his narrative on that subject in the "Historical Chart." Most of those contributions do not survive, but the opening article does, and in it Gregg acknowledges the wrongdoings of non-Mormons while at the same time pleading for public understanding of the provocations that led to violence:

> It is doubtless a difficult task for one who was a citizen of the county before that time, and who was personally cognizant of many of the events that transpired during those years of turmoil and terror, and participated in some of them, to write an impartial history of those times. The writer never believed that in the many strifes and difficulties between the Old Citizens and Mormons, all the wrong was on the one side and all the right on the other. He never claimed that the Mormons were guilty of the commission of all the crime, while their enemies had sinned in no wise against the majesty of the law or outraged the peace of the community. He knows too well–and has ever acknowledged it with sorrow–that such was not the case. But while he deplored the errors into which his own partizans had fallen, he knew that many of them were to be apologized for in the peculiar aggravations attending them. He knew, too, that many who denounced them as mobocrats and desperadoes, did so with only a partial knowledge of the circumstances, and could not be competent judges of the extent of the wrong committed.[10]

This passage indicates that Gregg was determined to write the history of the Mormon Conflict in order to explain what prompted the violence against Smith and his followers, a task that he did not fulfill completely for another twenty years. At issue was the character of non-Mormon residents in early Hancock County, people whom public opinion had turned against after the murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, as Gregg had predicted. He knew many of the "Old Citizens," and they were not "mobocrats and desperadoes," but law-abiding people, some of whom had nevertheless committed acts of violence in reaction to perceived injustices and from a conviction that Mormon leaders were undermining the legal and political systems of Hancock County and the United States. Although there was no justification for lawbreaking, in Gregg's view, there was a need for explaining the Mormon Conflict in more complex and accurate terms than religious persecution, or "desperadoes" versus the "Saints."

By March of 1859 Gregg located someone who was willing to help finance the *Representative*, Dr. W. S. Bush, former publisher of the Bloomington, Indiana, *Republican*.[11] Evidently Bush was responsible for installing H. H. Galloway and J. W. Beard as co-editors, for their names appeared on the masthead at about the same time. However, the newspaper continued to have financial problems, and by early 1860 Bush withdrew his support.

Gregg then decided to issue the *Representative* as a bi-weekly that offered an alternative to political weeklies, as he indicated in an advertising circular of 1860: "The Representative has now ceased to be a political paper. Since April last it

has been devoted exclusively to Agriculture, Horticulture, and Rural Affairs. To encourage the planting and culture of various kinds of fruits, and to instruct the reader what kinds to plant, will be made a special object; in short, it is designed to be such a paper as *ought* to be in every family in the country."[12] In spite of this new effort at developing patronage by moving the paper closer to the editor's horticultural interests, the *Hamilton Representative* ceased publication later in 1860.

Gregg was involved in a number of other activities during his early years in Hamilton. He was, for example, a member of the Republican Central Committee for Hancock County.[13] Hence, he was a Lincoln supporter during the presidential campaign of 1860. Gregg himself was never a politician, except for the year in Plymouth when he ran for school commissioner. He also helped to organize the Downing Horticultural Club, which drew members from several towns near the river, and he was the group's secretary in 1858-1859.[14] This organization led to the formation several years later of the much more successful Warsaw Horticultural Society. In 1861 Gregg was the tax assessor for Montebello Township and the assistant postmaster, under Dr. Charles Hay, for Warsaw.[15] He also engaged in the selling of fruits, which he raised on his few acres of land in Hamilton. Once again, his career demonstrates that a newspaperman in early Illinois often had to busy himself with other work when publishing ventures did not succeed.

By 1862 his horticultural interests had prompted him to launch a magazine entitled *The North-Western Fruit Grower's Companion*, which was printed in Keokuk. The first issue of the monthly publication (which had twenty-four pages) appeared in August; it contained articles on "The Raspberry," "Orchard Planting in Illinois," "Grape Growing," "Liquid for Destroying Insects," and so on.[16] The magazine even had a "Literary Department," in which Gregg tried to unite his interest in the plant world with his commitment to literature. No issues of this publication are known to survive, the above information coming from a typescript based on the copy once possessed by local historian Pearl Gordon Vestal. *The North-Western Fruit Grower's Companion* evidently failed for lack of patronage in less than a year.

During this period in Hamilton Gregg continued to write poetry. In 1860 three of his lyrics appeared in William T. Coggeshall's *Poets and Poetry of the West*: "Song of the Winds" (reprinted from the *Boston Pearl*), "Song of the Whippoorwill" (reprinted, with an added stanza, from the *Cincinnati Mirror*), and a more recent composition, "The Battle of the Right." The last of these closes with the poet urging people to

> Go forth!–when God and duty call,
> Join in the eager fight;
> Go forth!–in Heaven's name to wage
> The Battle of the Right![17]

PLYMOUTH LOCOMOTIVE.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL—DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE FARM AND THE FIRESIDE.

VOLUME I. PLYMOUTH, ILLINOIS.—SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1857. NUMBER 16.

The September 5, 1857 issue of the Plymouth Locomotive.

The Hamilton Representative.

VOLUME 1. HAMILTON, HANCOCK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, DECEMBER 11, 1858. NUMBER 31.

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Agricultural Matters.

[illegible]

[illegible] Cultivator, instead of a day's labor. That it makes a difference if one or twenty are sown in the ground.—*Tribune Farmer.*

CHINESE SUGAR CANE FOR PRINCIPLES.

We have of late heard of the enormous quantity, yielding so quickly and so easily, of the Chinese Sugar Cane, that we have felt a strong desire to experiment with it, and our planter in experimental farm, mentioned in another column, is determined to devote the most ground he can spare to the cane, and to make a report of the results. Every farmer should be interested in the subject, and should make a trial of it, if it is only a few rods in length. Our friend, Mr. Gaston, of Warsaw, has promised us a few seeds, which we shall plant and test, and we have no doubt we shall be able to report favorably of the cane. We have heard so much about the Chinese Sugar Cane, and so little of its actual results, that we feel a desire to see it, and to know for ourselves the facts. We have heard it spoken of as a great forage plant, and we think the experiment should be made with it for that purpose. In April last I planted twenty rows of it, and it did not come up. I then concluded it was too late for the season, and I did not plant any more. In April last I planted twenty rows of it, and it came up, and I thinned it out to a good stand. The rows were about one rod long. On the first of July I turned in twelve cows, poor, in the field, and they had great sport, and have not lost a single one yet. First time I supposed they ate it, and although I let it lay another week in the field, the footings left in it were almost all of it thoroughly eaten out. I made it a point to give my cows fresh good pasture, and had it not been for my fancy in allowing a crop of oats to be harvested I would have turned in another lot of cows. I think I could have fed twenty cows for two weeks on the twenty rows of cane. In the field of twenty rows I had a few rows of corn and of sorghum, and I have no doubt the cows preferred the cane to the corn, and I know they preferred it to the sorghum. I have also fed it to my horses, after pulling, day or evening, and I think it is a good thing for them. I have also given it to them as fodder, mixed with other fodder, and I think it is perfect for carting, as it does not shed its leaves, and is very tough. I have also cut it up and fed it to my cows

A War Relic.

[Editor Literary Life:— I hand you the following, written during the latter days of 1862, when the government seemed to be going too slow, and the people were clamoring for a more vigorous prosecution of the war; but despatches announcing a change and an onward movement, caused it to be thrown aside. It now turns up again, and recalls the feelings that existed at that date.— Th. Gregg. Hamilton, Ill.]

NO!

No policy in the conduct of the war—
No purpose but the Touch-'em-easy sort—
No cheering news of progress, ~~for~~ near or far—
No fighting rebels but for fun and sport—
No tools for faithful allie's hands—
No "shooting-sticks" for idle "contrabands"—
No-thing for 600,000 men to do,
But in the trenches lie,
And in the trenches die!

(over.)

Manuscript of "No!" Gregg sent the poem to the editor of Literary Life, *but it did not appear.*

The Dollar Monthly

And Old-Settlers' Memorial.

Organ of no Party but THE PEOPLE---Advocate of no Creed but: TRUTH: Devoted to the Free Discussion of all Subjects of Human Inquiry.

VOL. I. HAMILTON, ILLINOIS,—MAY 1, 1873. No. 1.

Published on the First day of each Month,
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Will be a marked feature of the paper. It will contain Lists of Names of Early Pioneers, with Incidents of Personal History, Dates of Settlement, etc; with Statistics of Growth, Population and Improvement.

*** Correspondence respectfully solicited.

ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

[FOR THE DOLLAR MONTHLY.]

AN OLD MAN'S STORY.

I AM an old man now. The frosts of sixty-odd winters have strewn the brown leaves about my pathway, and whitened my locks to the color of their drifting snows. My life has been by no means a tragical one, marked by few dramatic events on which a novelist could found a tale. It has been calm and unruffled as most men's lives, perhaps; its atmosphere disturbed by no very violent storms nor rent by pestilential siroccos.

Yet there was one event of thirty years ago,—an occurrence which stirred my soul to its very depths,—to which I cannot even now recur without a shudder.

It was in the summer of 1844. About dusk in the evening of the 10th of July in that year, the good steamer Amaranth, then plying between St. Louis and Galena, landed at the port of Warsaw. She was a handsome, fine-running, well-officered and popular boat,—and on this occasion had on board a large number of passengers. She lay at the landing only a few minutes,—long enough to put off a few packages of freight and take on a few passengers,—among whom were my wife and myself, and our child, a blue-eyed and golden haired daughter of two summers. The mother and child were conducted to the ladies' cabin, and I was for some time busy attending to our luggage. While so engaged, and while passing back and forth thro' the cabin, I observed that my child had disengaged herself from her mother, and was running about the boat in an extremely happy mood,—gazing at the chandeliers, the pictures, and the other splendors that were calculated to strike a child's fancy.

After the luggage had been attended to, I walked back to where my wife was sitting conversing with the ladies,—and not seeing my child, I asked where she was. Her mother answered that she had been with her only a few moments before—indeed she had not missed her. I proceeded to search for her at once; went out through the forward cabin—through the social hall—to the clerk's office—out upon the guards—down the steps upon deck,—and not finding her, returned to her mother with the statement that she could not be found. By this time we were both much alarmed, and we renewed the search under great agitation. Again I went the rounds of the cabins and the halls, and out upon the guards, looking into every nook and recess; but no child was visible. I peered out upon the dark waters, with the shuddering fear that she may have gone overboard; but only a few glimmering stars and fleecy clouds could be seen reflected in their depths. I listened—but no sound came up from their surface, as of our darling imploring aid; no sound, save the eternal plashing of the wheels, the rush of waters around the prow, and the echo of the steamer's puffing from the adjacent shores. All was dark and dismal, and, O, the despair that took possession of my soul! "Can my child," thought I, "have fallen overboard, by some accident,—and is now struggling for life in these dark waters?" "She is! She is!" I exclaimed; and my imagination pictured her there, far away in the receding waves, her white arms extended for help, while her feeble wail seemed to smite mine ear like a knell of despair.

Quite beside myself, and in my desperation, I was about to seek the officers and ask that an alarm should be given, or some effort made to recover the lost one.

Passing through the social hall, half delirious in my despair, there happened an opening in a crowd of gentlemen, who all this time had been gathered around the bar;—and through that opening—as though an angel had burst upon my vision from the skies,—I espied my child! —happy, as we had seen her last, and unconscious of the deep despair her absence had brought upon her parents' hearts. She had been placed upon the counter by the gentlemen, —where she was standing, candy in one hand and an apple or an orange in the other,—surrounded by gentlemen, who, attracted by her sunny locks and happy manner, had taken her up there to enjoy her innocent prattle, and who had been liberally rewarding her with the good things displayed before her. The crowd had been so compact around her while I had been searching, that I had not seen her,—and they were equally unaware of our distress at her loss. I at once sprang to her, exclaiming, "O, my child!"—and, seizing her, bore her away to her distracted mother, without so much as saying, "By your leave, gentlemen." I remembered since, that their eyes followed me in astonishment at my conduct. I bore her away to her mother, too much occupied with my own feelings to take a thought as to how my conduct had been regarded. No doubt they looked upon me as a very boor in manners.

Just then the steamer's bell rang the approach to Keokuk, and all was bustle and confusion on board. Many of those gentlemen left the boat a few moments afterwards, and I never met them again. I was a stranger to them, and they to me; but as it was, I lost their good opinion.

More than a quarter of a century has rolled away since that event occurred, and the noble Amaranth has gone the way of all steamboats. Many of my companions in that short voyage, have doubtless also gone the voyage to "that bourne whence no traveller returns." Yet some of them are doubtless living, with locks more or less whitened as my own. And if so, I would be only too glad to convey to them this explanation of my conduct. And I would also convey to them the sorrowful fact, that five days thereafter, the bright and interesting prattler, in whom they were so well pleased,—the idol of two since desolate hearts,—was laid to sleep beneath the green sward of the Rock-Island bluffs.

G.

CULLINGS FROM THE POETS.

Nor yet can laws, tho' Solon's self should frame,
Each shade of guilt discriminate and name;
For senates well their sacred task fulfil,
Who general cures provide for general ill.
[St. John Honeywood.

The queen of May has bound her virgin brow,
And hung with blossoms every fruit tree bough;
The sweet Southwest, among the early flowers,
Whispers the coming of delighted hours.
While birds within the leaping foliage sing
Their music-welcome to returning Spring.
[Rufus Dawes.

A lamp is lit in woman's eye,
That souls * * * * remember angels by.
[Nathaniel P. Willis.

The first issue (May 1, 1873) of Gregg's Dollar Monthly.

This poem reflects Gregg's earnest dedication to the pursuit of justice and morality, and if the "Battle" is understood as a military conflict, it represents a departure from his earlier emphasis on nonviolence no matter what the cause, as presented in his 1838 article, "The Peace Principle." Of course, while at work on "The Battle of the Right," Gregg may have sensed the coming of the Civil War.

That lyric of three stanzas had an influence on a later poem that dealt explicitly with the war. *Ruth: A Poem for the Times* was published in pamphlet form at the *Hancock New Era* printshop in Warsaw during 1864. (Thomas Sharp was editor of that newspaper.) With 248 lines, it is Gregg's longest poetic work. *Ruth* centers around an old grandmother whose father had died several decades earlier in the Revolutionary War, and who urges her grandsons to fight in the Civil War because it is similarly concerned with liberty. The two young men die in the conflict, but at the poem's close Grandma Ruth has a vision of the post-war future that justifies their sacrifice:

> No more the wail of woe is heard–
> No more the clank of chain–
> No more the dusky bondmen bow
> Beneath their load of pain.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And Man stands forth, at length, redeemed
> From power of brother Man;
> And Equal Rights is writ anew
> In God's Eternal Plan![18]

Gregg evidently thought of *Ruth* as his most important poetic achievement, for he reprinted it in *The Dollar Monthly* in January of 1875 and in his *History of Hancock County* five years afterward. However, it is not a good poem, although the combination of sentimentality, patriotism, and Christian morality might have made it a popular work in its own time, had it been published on the East Coast.

Gregg produced a better Civil War poem two years earlier, when the conflict was dragging on and he, like many others, was impatient for the Union Army to achieve its purpose. In "No!" he became critical of the government's management of events, as the following lines indicate:

> No policy in the conduct of the war–
> No purpose but the Touch-'em-easy sort–
> No cheering news of progress, near or far–
> No fighting rebels but for fun and sport–
> No tools for faithful allies' hands–
> No "shooting-sticks" for idle "contrabands"–
> No thing for 600,000 men to do,
> But in the trenches lie,

And in the trenches die![19]

Poems that were in any way critical of the war were not as likely to achieve publication as those which praised the purpose of the conflict or the heroism of the Union soldiers–unless they were sent to a Democratic, or "Copperhead," newspaper. Since Gregg would probably not have done that, this lyric may never have been printed.

After the Civil War, Gregg decided to compile and publish a book entitled *War Memorial of Hancock County*, which was to contain not only a complete record of the service of Hancock County men but "Sketches of Campaigns, Battles, Seiges, Expeditions, Personal Exploits, or other incidents of a Soldier's life."[20] Although he received considerable encouragement from a number of county residents, especially former soldiers, the volume never appeared. The information that Gregg compiled was later used in his *History of Hancock County*.

Still an organization builder after the Civil War, Gregg helped found the Warsaw Horticultural Society in 1866, along with such old friends as Dr. Charles Hay, William N. Grover, and A. C. Hammond.[21] In a presidential address at the December meeting of that year, Gregg asserted that the members were "pioneers" in the field of horticulture, "the advance-guard, or rather, an out-post of that grand army of men and women which is, in time, to make these broad prairies bloom and blossom as a garden."[22] He later served as secretary of that very active society until 1875.

He helped form the Hancock County Pioneers' Association in 1869. The first meeting was held on June 15 of that year at Carthage, and Senator Orville H. Browning was the guest speaker.[23] The organization undoubtedly benefited from the wave of nostalgia that swept the country after the Civil War. The formation of the group helped Gregg obtain information that would be useful ten years later when he was at work on the county history. He was secretary of the Pioneers' Association for six years.

No records concerning Gregg's employment during the later 1860s have been located, except for an indication that he was appointed Hamilton Postmaster on March 17, 1869.[24] He continued in that position until 1876. Of course, he was raising and selling fruits, and probably fruit plants and trees, at that time, and Sarah was still conducting a private school in the Gregg home. As a result, the family got along fairly well–perhaps better than during some periods when Thomas was editing a newspaper.

Late in 1872 the Greggs were struck by tragedy for the second time, when their older daughter, Eva, died from congestion of the brain.[25] She was twenty-eight years old and had been teaching with her mother for several years. This left one daughter, Stella, who was twenty-three and still living with her parents. She never married, and consequently, after her death in 1941, the Greggs had no living descendants.

In 1873, after being out of the newspaper business for eleven years, Gregg launched his most famous periodical, *The Dollar Monthly and Old Settlers'*

Memorial. Essentially a monthly magazine and not concerned with contemporary events, it was one of the most unique "newspapers" in nineteenth-century Illinois, as well as Gregg's most thorough expression of himself as a journalist. The newspaper's motto indicated that it would be politicaly neutral: "Organ of no Party but the People–Advocate of no Creed but Truth." His central purpose was neither literary nor agricultural–although *The Dollar Monthly* had both a "Horticultural Department" and a series entitled "Western Poets and Poetry." Rather, as the title suggests, the newspaper was primarily devoted to regional history. Gregg appealed to his readers for old newspaper issues, to provide sources for his historical articles, and he asked them for information about the first settlers, churches, schools, mills, etc. in towns within or near Hancock County.[26] He conducted a "Memorial Department" devoted to "Pioneer Necrology," for which he wrote dozens of biographical sketches, and he printed occasional articles, by himself and others, on frontier towns (like Keokuk, Fort Madison, and Quincy) and pioneer life in general.

Among the most interesting items is an account of Black Hawk, which refers to Gregg's acquaintance with the Chief at Fort Des Moines in 1837.[27] He also wrote two articles on American Indian policy, emphasizing that the government had handled the red men poorly, treating them "by turns as independent nations, then as wards, and then as outlaws."[28] He recommended that the government give each dispossessed Indian a piece of land and a home, along with farm implements and agricultural instruction.

The most widely known *Dollar Monthly* item related to the Indians was not written by Gregg. "Legend of the Wishing Spring" by Mrs. A. M. Mitchell, which depicts the sacrifice of an Indian maiden for her beloved, has become accepted by many Hancock County residents as an "authentic" Indian story of that area.[29] It may, in fact, have been first told orally by the earliest settlers–for Mrs. Mitchell was the daughter of Warsaw pioneers Mark and Margaret Aldrich–but the sentimentalized tale is probably not of Indian origin. Gregg also published a number of her poems, including a lyric in the same vein titled "The Indian Grave," loosely based on her mother's recollections of an Indian at The Point (later called Keokuk) in 1829-1830.[30]

Gregg also wrote a series entitled "Sketches of the Mormon Era in Hancock County"–his most extensive discussion of that violent period in any of his newspapers. One of the articles in that series provides an especially thorough account of the destruction of the Nauvoo *Expositor* in the spring of 1844. Gregg viewed that act as a clear violation of the editors' Constitutional right to due process of law: "Certain men were charged with offenses against law and morality–with being sinners and swindlers generally. They were charged, not in action for libel, or by indictment before a grand jury; but by statements made in session by members of a common council–each one stating what he knew, or was supposed to know, about them–whereupon it was voted not to punish *them* for crimes committed and proven, but to destroy their printing press, as a nuisance!–owned in part by men who had no charges brought against them!"[31] As his 1836 motto for *The*

Carthagenian–"While I have liberty to write, I will write for Liberty"–indicated, Gregg viewed freedom of the press as essential to the maintenance of liberty, and so no act by the Mormon leaders could have been more abhorrent than the destruction of a newspaper.

Among the original poetry that appeared in *The Dollar Monthly* are several lyrics by Gregg, including "After the Battle" (on the heroism of soldiers), "Hope, Mercy, Truth" (which celebrates those values), "Waiting" (on the approach of death), "The Legend of Einsideln" (about a Swiss monk's death and subsequent veneration), "Mary–A Heart History" (on the death of his first daughter), and "At Her Grave" (on his longing for Eva, who died in 1872).[32] None of these lyrics are notable, but they represent typical poetic interests of the nineteenth century.

Starting in 1874 Gregg had the assistance of D. W. Brownell of Toledo, Ohio, a younger man who had once resided with the Greggs in Hamilton. As corresponding editor, Brownell contributed occasional short articles and poems until the newspaper ceased publication two years later. Like Gregg, he was also an advocate of the temperance cause and a critic of governmental policy toward the Indians.

Beginning in January of 1875, Gregg tried to increase patronage by associating *The Dollar Monthly* with Keokuk as well as Hamilton. Each issue from then on contained a "Keokuk Department" that focused on matters across the river. This aspect of the newspaper was under the control of a pseudonymous figure named "Hudibras Hawk-eye," who characterized himself as follows:

> From my fourth story attic window I make my bow, gentle reader. Here, perched high in air, I can look down upon the world . . . and with pity, admiration, or contempt, as the case may be, can observe the motley crowd that goes surging beneath.
>
> But in which of the 100 attics that line Main street it is that I swing my bunk at night, and munch my sausage and crackers in the morning, I shall decline to tell. . . . And my attic–rough and cob-webbed though it may be–is passably comfortable withal. At the grate I can warm my fingers when they become numb with cold; and in my ricketty armchair I can sit and doze when ideas cease to flow. . . .[33]

It is impossible to identify this figure from the contents of his "Keokuk Department." He may, in fact, have been Gregg himself, whose historical interests and literary pretentions were similar to those of the mysterious–and perhaps fictitious–attic dweller. The pseudonym is a compound based on the central figure in Samuel Butler's famous British satire, *Hudibras*, and the well-known nickname for Iowans.

At the end of 1875, Gregg admitted to his readers that "Old Settlers' biographies and incidents of pioneer ife, however interesting to a limited circle, will not pay," and therefore, he was eliminating the historical material and chang-

ing the newspaper into "a Rural and Family Journal."[34] With the January, 1876 issue, it became *The Rural Messenger*. He entered into partnership with a man named Brown, but that lasted only until midsummer, and then Gregg handled the newspaper alone until it failed in the spring of 1877. When that occurred, he was out of journalism for good, after founding and editing eight newspapers and four magazines (as well as editing the *Warsaw Signal* and co-editing the Rock Island *Upper Mississippian*) over a period of forty-four years.

During the next year, Gregg wrote a letter to the editor of the *Augusta Herald* in which he reflected on the early newspaper activities of Hancock County and on his own experience in particular. His letter offers an interesting statement about the economic risks of frontier newspaper work and suggests the main cause of financial failure:

> It would take a long chapter to tell the story of all these ventures; the births, growths, suspensions, resurrections, failures, and final flickerings of newspaper life in Hancock County. How many budding hopes blasted–castles in the air exploded–who can tell! How many dollars expended, debts incurred, fortunes melted away, mortgages foreclosed, sherriff's writs executed–who can tell, and who cares! How many heart-breaks, tears and sorrows occasioned, who knows and who cares!
>
> Carthage, Warsaw, Nauvoo, Dallas, LaHarpe, Plymouth, Augusta, Hamilton–all have had their several enterprises, and their failures; and yet all are now represented [by newspapers] except the latter. I have done my share, and more than my share, in this matter of starting newspapers in this county; and I think I know something of the causes of failure. Ambition to sport a newspaper is a prevailing feature of village growth throughout the West, and there are always men to be found who are ambitious to run them. The result is that throughout the country, I think I may say without exception, the attempt has been made too early, and before there was sufficient backing to sustain them.[35]

Frontier villages wanted to "sport a newspaper" because local boosters viewed every town–especially those along the Mississippi River, where Gregg launched his newspapers–as a potential city. As it turned out, all of the Hancock County communities in which Gregg founded his periodicals are still small towns today.

6

Hamilton–the Later Years

During the last fifteen years of his life, Gregg maintained the horticultural and temperance interests that he had developed over several decades, and he produced two books, a history of Hancock County and a study of Joseph Smith and the Mormons. At the same time, he became the most widely known and well-respected old pioneer of the county and was looked upon as something of a sage by many younger residents. He may have continued to write poetry, but if so, his later lyrics have not been discovered. (An undated manuscript poem entitled "Independence Hymn," which extols America as the land of liberty, may have been written for the nation's centennial in 1876, but unless a published version is located, there is no way to be certain.)[1]

In his 1878 letter to the editor of the *Augusta Herald*, Gregg mentions that he and "Mr. Clarke" are at work on a history of Hancock County. Although Clarke is not otherwise identified, Gregg must have been referring to S. J. Clarke, the Macomb bookseller and journalist who had just written the *History of McDonough County* (1878). For whatever reason, Clarke did not stay with the project, and Gregg completed the 1,000-page *History of Hancock County, Illinois* (1880) alone. Clarke eventually moved to Chicago, where he founded the successful S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, which specialized in county histories.

Because Gregg had spent over forty years in Hancock County gathering information of local interest for his newspapers, his volume has outstanding thoroughness and accuracy, when compared to similar county histories of that time. His chapters on "Forts Johnson and Edwards," "Organization and First Proceedings [of the county]," "Hancock in the Rebellion," and other subjects benefit from the extensive research that he conducted. Likewise, "Hancock Newspapers," "Pioneers' Association," and "Old Land Marks" are based on personal experience. Naturally, his account of the county's newspapers was particularly authoritative, and he listed fifty that had appeared since he had launched *The Carthagenian* in 1836, a figure which indicates that his own financial problems were typical of early newspapermen in that area.[2]

His many character sketches of early settlers are authoritative as well as interesting because he was personally acquainted with the first county clerk, Wesley Williams, frontier businessman Artois Hamilton, Warsaw founder Mark Aldrich, physician Charles Hay, and many others who were prominent in the pioneer period of the county's history. Of particular interest is his lengthy biographical sketch of Thomas Sharp, which is perhaps the most extensive nineteenth-century discussion of an Illinois newspaper editor.[3]

His 136-page chapter on "The Mormon Period" is an outstanding section of

the history. Although his conviction that Smith was a complete charlatan bars him from achieving much insight into the Prophet, his criticisms are sometimes penetrating, as when he discusses Mormon abuse of the power of habeas corpus and the destruction of the Nauvoo *Expositor*.[4] He also recognizes the importance of the Nauvoo Charter in providing a civic system that could protect Smith from outside interference. He reprints the entire document, along with various city ordinances that display how the Charter could be used to deny the civil rights of those opposed to the Prophet. The following one, for example, is from December of 1843:

> Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Nauvoo, according to the intent and meaning of the Charter, for the "benefit and convenience" of Nauvoo, that hereafter if any person or persons shall come with a process, demand or requisition, founded upon the aforesaid Missouri difficulties, to arrest said Joseph Smith, he or they shall be subject to be arrested by any officer of the city, with or without process, and tried by the Municipal Court, upon testimony, and if found guilty, sentenced to imprisonment in the city prison for life, which convict or convicts can only be pardoned by the Governor, with the consent of the Mayor of said city.
>
> Joseph Smith, Mayor[5]

When Gregg comments on the apostates who published *The Expositor* in an attempt to expose Smith as a lecherous man and challenge his political domination of Nauvoo, he criticizes them as well–for being late to recognize or assert that the rights of others were sometimes disregarded by the Prophet: "now that he and they had quarreled, that *their* personal rights had been trampled upon, that the sanctity of *their* homes had been invaded, they sought to put him down. Better late than never. . . ."[6] Even though Gregg's bias is obvious and he is not always accurate, the long chapter is still one of the most significant studies of the Mormons in Illinois. (Naturally, all contemporaneous memoirs and commentaries that discuss the character and values of people on either side of the conflict, whether by Mormons or Anti-Mormons, are biased.)

Gregg's narrative of local events is generally reliable because–his seven-month absence in Rock Island notwithstanding–he was certainly one of the most well-informed residents of Hancock County during the 1840s. (Of course, modern scholarship has provided much more detail about many of the occurrences, especially the murders at the Carthage Jail and the subsequent trial of the accused assassins.) Included in his chronicle of post-assassination violence are accounts of lawbreaking by both Mormons and Anti-Mormons. For example, he describes the killing of Franklin Worrell by the posse of pro-Mormon sheriff J. B. Backenstos, the disappearance at Nauvoo of Phineas Wilcox, who was suspected by the Mormons of being a spy, and the mysterious murder of Anti-Mormon Andrew Daubenheyer.[7] He also recounts the destruction of the Mormon settlement at

Morley-town, where "as many as 100 or 125 houses were burned and their occupants driven off."[8] Despite his bias against the Mormons, Gregg condemns all of the lawbreaking, referring to the violent deeds of the Anti-Mormons as "acts which had no warrant in law or order, and which cannot be reconciled with any correct principles of reasoning . . . acts which had for their object, and which finally resulted in, the forcible expulsion of the Mormon people from the county."[9] His narrative of the Mormon Conflict is climaxed by an extensive and vivid account of the Battle of Nauvoo, which occurred in October of 1845 and resulted in a treaty that called for the Mormons to leave the state.[10]

As one might expect, Gregg's *History of Hancock County* was not a venture from which he earned much money. After his *Dollar Monthly* failed, the family was largely supported through the teaching of his wife and daughter, as well as from his horticultural pursuits. The Greggs were in difficult financial circumstances during this period. In an 1879 letter to state representative Brooks R. Hamilton, Gregg asked to be appointed census taker for Hancock County. He remarked, "I have seldom in all my long residence in the county asked for a public office. But now, in my declining years, I certainly need one. . . ."[11] Unfortunately, he did not receive the appointment.

The *History of Hancock County* was followed ten years later by an even longer discussion of the Mormons, entitled *The Prophet of Palmyra* (1890). It is not so much a biography of Smith as a history of the Latter Day Saints' Church from the appearance of *The Book of Mormon* through the exodus from Illinois. Here, too, Gregg's attitude toward the Prophet and other Mormon leaders is consistently negative. He views *The Book of Mormon* as a carefully planned deception, based partly on Solomon Spaulding's "Manuscript Found" (c. 1813), and he relies on a number of Mormon esposés–such as E. D. Howe's *Mormonism Unveiled* (1834) and William Harris's *Mormonism Portrayed* (1841)–for information about Smith. Naturally, he gives extensive attention to the Mormon era in Illinois, producing the most thorough of his several discussions of that subject, although it is highly dependent upon the 1880 county history.

Included among the various quoted sources is a lengthy letter of his own, written for the *Missouri Republican* in 1846, which describes Nauvoo just after the exodus. It is one of the more vivid eyewitness accounts of the town at that time:

> On Tuesday morning I took a stroll through a portion of the now deserted streets, and for miles, I may safely say, I passed nothing but tenantless houses; some of them closed and barred, and others with doors wide open, as if left in haste. All along the city, for miles, wherever I went, might be seen on the doors, or on the walls, some notice that the tenement was for sale, or for rent.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> I took occasion to ascertain as near as possible the number of houses in the city. From my position on the Temple, I could count a

> large portion of the city; and . . . I think there are at least two thousand houses in the city proper, and in the suburbs five hundred more–making in all two thousand five hundred houses. About half of these are mere shanties, built some of logs, some of poles plastered over, and some framed. Of the remaining portion–say twelve hundred houses–all are tolerably fit residences, and one-half are good brick or frame houses. There are probably five hundred brick houses in the city, most of which are good buildings, and some are elegant and handsomely finished residences, such as would adorn any city.
>
> Of these two thousand five hundred houses, I think about one-twelfth are tenanted–some by Mormons who have not yet got away, the remainder by Anti-Mormons, new or old settlers, who have been permitted to stay.
>
> Col. Geddes, of Fountain Green, in this county, was left in command of a small force, when the army disbanded, and has been in command during the past week. He has now returned to his home, leaving twenty or thirty men at the Temple, under the command of Major McAuley and Mr. Brattle. A small force will probably remain in the city as long as the Mormons remain on the other side of the river.[12]

Following this reprinted letter, Gregg criticizes the military move against Nauvoo for its "enormity" and "unnecessary severity" upon the Mormons.[13] Hence, as always in his writings, he is opposed to injustice and violence, even when he believes that the offenses which bring it forth are themselves serious and need to be dealt with.

Elsewhere in the book Gregg identifies the four classes of citizens in Hancock County during 1844 and 1845, with respect to the Mormon problem: "*First*, the Mormons themselves; 2. A class called Jack-Mormons, who, not members of the sect, adhered to and sustained them for political gain; 3. Old citizens who were Anti-Mormon at heart, but who refused to countenance any but lawful measures for the redress of grievances; and 4. Anti-Mormons, who, now that the crisis was at hand, advocated 'war and extermination.'"[14] In describing the third group, Gregg was accurately depicting himself, although he has sometimes been viewed incorrectly as one who sanctioned Anti-Mormon violence because of his newspaper association with Thomas Sharp and his severe criticism of Smith.

A letter by Gregg to a former Hancock County resident, written shortly after *The Prophet of Palmyra* appeared, provides further insight into his view of two matters relating to Smith's life story. Concerning the golden plates and the Prophet's claim of a divine mission, Gregg says he is "convinced" that Emma Smith never believed the "yarn" spun by her husband.[15] He does not indicate the basis for his assertion. Also, he admits that he "never knew" whether the not guilty verdict in the trial of Smith's accused assassins was "a *true* one."[16] As this comment reveals, after forty-five years he still had suspicions about the guilt of Thomas Sharp and the others, but in spite of his friendship with them, he did not have any additional information about the case that he failed to publish.

Thomas and Sarah Gregg on their golden wedding anniversary, 1886.

Hamilton, Ill.
Aug. 15. 1890.

Hon. B. Warren
and Committee of Old Settlers.

Your card, kindly inviting me "to talk to the Old Settlers", if I feel able, and it will not be asking too much of me, was duly received.

It certainly is not asking too much of me, to invite me to talk to Old Settlers, at any time, and whenever I meet them — as which I humbly hope I may be able to do, as long as I am able to talk at all. This I have done for 54 years past, greatly to my pleasure and profit. The talks have been, ~~done~~, however, individually and hand-to-hand. If your polite note is to be construed to be an invitation to stand up before and in a formal way, address a multitude of them, at your approaching gathering, —

8

honestly be said, never gave a false judgement.

And lastly — at Warsaw, among its many famous men, I will only take time to mention those four of its proprietors, John N. Wilcox, Mark Aldrich, John Montague and James M. Wells — whose faith in their new city's future, if carried to its full fruition, would ere this have placed Chicago in the back-ground, and possibly located the Columbian Exposition still, near the center of the Continent.

But, excuse me: I did not begin this intending to write a Pioneer History. My object was to decline the task you would have imposed on me, and to wish unbounded success to the Hancock County Old Settlers' Association, and many happy returns of its Reunions.

Yours, faithfully,
Thomas Gregg.

Gregg's 1890 letter to B. Warren, responding to a request to speak at a Hancock County Old Settlers' Association meeting.

The gravestone of Thomas and Sarah Gregg in Hamilton's Oakwood Cemetery.

During the last years of his life, Gregg continued to write essays on the other subjects in which he was particularly interested. For example, the *Transactions of the Illinois State Horticultural Society* carried two of his articles during the 1880s. One of them, entitled "Report on Forestry," is a remarkably far-sighted plea for forest conservation. It includes the following comments:

> The pages of history inform us that portions of the Old World–now bleak and barren wastes, scorched, treeless and herbless, and uninhabited except by wandering tribes–were once among the most fertile and populous on the globe. Civilization has its triumphs and its victories, but it also has its avenges, and carries in its own bosom numerous destructive agencies.
>
> On this subject of forest destruction and its disastrous effects upon the future of our country and the welfare of its people, it would seem there can be but one opinion, and yet there is a strange apathy in the public mind on the subject. It is one of the most important of all material questions that can receive public attention. The evil will go on at a rapid rate, until the public mind can be aroused to its importance and concerted and vigorous means adopted to check it.[17]

The other item in that horticultural series is a tribute to J. Ambrose Wight, one of the first editors of the *Prairie Farmer* magazine.[18]

Gregg also wrote newspaper articles on behalf of the temperance movement, such as "What Shall be done with the Liquor Traffic?," "Licens or No Licens," "The Saloon Question," and "Who Are Responsible?," which survive in manuscript form. In the first of these, he describes the major difficulties in promoting temperance and then summarizes the effort as a mighty battle:

> The enemy is entrenched in every part of the field. . . . The fight is not alone with the low-down doggeries, that steal away the hard-earned bread belonging to the wives and children of the already fallen. It is not alone with the "respectable," gaudy, bedizened, high-toned and "high-licensed" saloons, that lure and seduce our young men from their pure and peaceful homes, and start them on their downward career. It is not alone with the wholesalers or manufacturers. But it is with them all–entrenched behind a formidable breastwork of public opinion–which, thanks to an overruling Providence and Nineteenth Century enlightenment, is fast crumbling away![19]

The second and third articles are the most interesting. Sparked by an upcoming vote on the licensing of saloons in Hamilton during 1891, these letters to the editor of the local newspaper, the *Hamilton Press*, are meant to be contrasted with one another. "Licens or No Licens" is a defense of saloons by "No Krank," whose ignorance is revealed by his atrocious grammar and spelling:

> Mister Editur– Wont you let me say a word on the subjec, now that

> our Sitty Counsil has ordered a vote on the question of Licens or No Licens. I kno that some of the Kranks has bin fussen about it til they got the counsil to listen to thare talk; but when we come to look at the good these Saloons has did for the town, you and every other sensable man or woman, must stand back and be ashamed of themselves. Just look at our streets, and just look at our side walks, and see the good that this munny pored into our tresury has dun for the sitty. Wy, you Kno as wel as I do, that our town has been boomen ever sence the fust licens was issued–till now thare aint nary house in town but whats got a family, and people going about beggin for places to put thare wimen and babys–and ever so many houses going up all over town. Thats the way the sitty of Hamilton is goen ahead, and you and all of us Kno or ort to Kno whats did it.
>
> Sumbody ses youre paper is what did it. Verry likely, aint it? We've had papers before–but no boom til these saloons come. I hear that you are agin the saloons. If you are I dont keer; enny way, you may put this in your colums, ef you like–or put it in your pipe and smoke it, jist which you chuse–and I am your fellow voter, and
>
> No Krank[20]

In short, the letter is a satire on those who stood opposed to temperance in Hamilton when the licensing question was being considered. Gregg's companion piece, "The Saloon Question," is a refutation of "No Krank's" argument: "The saloons are booming the town, say some of our citizens. Do they? Oh, what a silly, false, and mean argument that is. . . . But the saloons have brought a population. They have. I will not compare that population to the other population of the city."[21] In spite of Gregg's efforts, the city council voted again to license saloons, as they had done a couple years earlier.

In "Who Are Responsible?" Gregg criticizes temperance advocates themselves for failing to show their complete disapproval of establishments that sell liquor. Since some taverns also sold groceries at that time, he calls upon supporters of the anti-liquor cause in Hamilton to boycott those businesses entirely so that they would be forced to close. The manuscript has the following notation on it by Stella Gregg: "The last article Dear Father ever wrote for the News papers, Dec. 1891."[22]

Gregg's personal life during his last years was largely uneventful. He continued to grow fruits and vegetables on his acreage in Hamilton, and he remained an avid reader. In 1886 the Greggs celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.[23] It was marked by a ceremony at the Hamilton City Hall, attended by a large crowd, in which the elderly pioneer couple repeated their marriage vows–this time according to the Quaker practice of Gregg's heritage. They were apparently the first couple married in Hancock County to celebrate their fiftieth anniversary there. Surely the most unfortunate event of Gregg's later years was an accident, about 1890, in which he was "knocked down by a team and run over."[24] He suffered a number of serious bruises and was incapacitated for several days, but

he eventually recovered.

In an address to the Old Settlers' Reunion at Warsaw, August 25, 1891, he humorously referred to himself as "worn, wasted, lame, deaf, decrepit–quite used up," but he was nevertheless in full possession of his mental ability and was ambulatory throughout his later years.[25] Indeed, he was a popular commentator on the frontier period. One newspaper article described him in this way: "Tall, erect, and courtly, easily approached, and with a fund of reminiscences of the early days, he was much sought by old and young, so entertaining were his recitals of pioneer days."[26] In spite of his advanced age, Gregg was asked by the Old Settlers' Association to assemble information about the pioneers of the county that would add to what was already available in his 1880 history. He accepted the task and began a work entitled "Records of Biographies and Obituaries of Hancock County Pioneers," which contains several dozen biographical sketches, including a one-page "Autobiography of Thomas Gregg." The manuscript volume is now a prized possession of the Hancock County Historical Society.

Gregg died on February 11, 1892, from an attack of the grippe.[27] (The disease was a common killer of the elderly at that time, and so it caused the death of many an old pioneer.) Along with a laudatory obituary, the *Carthage Republican* printed a poem by Gay Davidson entitled "Thomas Gregg," which views his death as an event of unusual significance. It lists the various roles he played during his career, as the following couplet indicates: "So passed the journalist and seer,/ Historian, author, pioneer."[28] D. W. Brownell, the former corresponding editor of *The Dollar Monthly* who was then working in Atlanta, also wrote a poem about his death, "A Golden Sunset: In Memory of Thos. Gregg." It sketches his character and values, with particular emphasis on his unswerving commitment to causes he believed were right:

So does the sage depart, whose lengthened days
    Bring to the last a mind undimmed and strong;
Whose facile pen has won fair meed of praise,
    Nor ever swerved from right nor feared the wrong.

Though by his labors, faithful and unslacked,
    Came little to his hand of worldly store,
Be it not said that his reward he lacked–
    A blameless conscience he had valued more.

And friendships came that wealth could not have bought;
    And in the sphere he chose were honors gained;
The calm of peace was with his life inwrought,
    And home, that next to truth his love enchained.

A waiting life was his, for oft defeat
    His cherished hopes had met, yet as his pen
Has well expressed, not idly would he wait,

But with new hope his arm he bared again.

How well the psalmist has a life like his
Described, with all his virtues there approved,
And crowned it with assured reward, in this–
Divinely favored–"he shall not be moved."[29]

Gregg was buried in an unmarked grave in Hamilton's Oakwood Cemetery. (Back in the 1850s, he had encouraged the community to establish that cemetery, with a series of articles in the *Hamilton Representative*.) Five years later, Sarah was also interred there. The exact location of their gravesite gradually passed from public memory, but eighty-three years after Gregg's death it was found by members of the Hancock County Historical Society, and a granite boulder with a bronze plaque was placed there as a memorial. The inscription reads:

In Memory of
Thomas Gregg 1808-1892
Pioneer Editor, Author and Historian
of Hancock County.
Sarah Davis Lawton Gregg 1807-1897
His wife, Pioneer Teacher.
erected by
Hancock County Historical Society
1975

Although his career was marked by continued lack of financial success, Thomas Gregg nevertheless made an outstanding contribution to Hancock County through his persistent concern for local development, literary expression, and historical understanding. His belief that local history was significant and ought to be preserved yielded a written legacy of inestimable value to later generations in that area. He also left a biographical record that reveals a life of moral conviction, sensitivity to injustice, cultural leadership, and determination to benefit society.

Because of his work as a journalist and author, Gregg deserves to be regarded as one of the more significant early Illinois men of letters. Not only did he launch the first newspaper in several communities, his *Dollar Monthly* is one of the most unique special interest periodicals of the nineteenth century in Illinois. Although his lyrics are conventional, they are as good as those of most early midwestern authors, and a few–such as "Winter Song," "December," and "No!"–are notable for their vigorous expression. He was also a versatile prose writer, who produced essays on controversial topics like temperance and American Indian policy as well as a book and various articles on horticulture–and even a couple of satires, as his "City of Humbug" and "No Krank" pieces indicate. More importantly, Gregg wrote the earliest Illinois county history–the 1846 "Historical Chart"–as well as one of the finest full-length Illinois county histories of the nineteenth

century, and in those and other publications, he provided a chronicle of the Mormon Conflict that is of continuing significance.

Notes

1. From Belmont to Cincinnati

[1] Gregg received some attention from historians more than fifty years ago. See David C. Malt, "Thomas Gregg, Local Historian and Author," *The Annals of Iowa*, 14 (1924), 263-71, and J. A. Gordon, "Thomas Gregg: Historian, Editor, and Publisher," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 18 (1925), 433-35. Both articles are too brief to include anything more than a sketch of his activities–which is, in each case, incomplete. Gregg's early Iowa newspapers are briefly discussed by Douglas C. McMurtrie in "The Beginnings of Printing in Iowa," *The Annals of Iowa*, 19 (1933), 9-10, 18.

[2] "Autobiography of Thomas Gregg" in Gregg's "Records of Biographies and Obituaries of Hancock County Pioneers," p. 47, in the Hancock County Historical Society Collection, Carthage; Gregg family genealogical papers, in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copies in the Thomas Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library), and Hazel May Middleton Kendall, *Quaker Greggs* (Anderson, Ind.: The Author, 1944), pp. 174-75, 181-82.

[3] Thomas Gregg, "James Gregg," in "Records of . . . Hancock County Pioneers," p. 1.

[4] Autobiographical letter by Thomas Gregg (no date), printed in *An Illustrated Atlas of Hancock County* (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1874), p. 32. On the log cabin school of Joseph Wright, see *History of the Upper Ohio Valley*, II (Madison, Wisconsin: Brant and Fuller, 1890), 765-66.

[5] John Alexander Caldwell, *History of Belmont and Jefferson Counties, Ohio* (Wheeling, W. V.: Historical Publishing Co., 1880), p. 227. The description is from a letter written by a St. Clairsville resident on December 30, 1808.

[6] John Kilbourn, *The Ohio Gazetteer* (Columbus: John Kilbourn, 1831), p. 271.

[7] Autobiographical letter by Thomas Gregg (no date), printed in *An Illustrated Atlas of Hancock County*, p. 33.

[8] Thomas Gregg to his sisters, 4 Dec. 1831, pp. 1-2. This letter is in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[9] Ibid., p. 3.

[10] Ibid., p. 4.

[11] "Prospectus," *The Literary Cabinet and Western Olive Branch*, 16 Feb. 1833, p. 8.

[12] "The Indians," *The Literary Cabinet and Western Olive Branch*, 3 Aug. 1833, p. 103.

[13] "The Nation's Errors," p. 3. Manuscript in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[14] Announcement in *The Literary Cabinet and Western Olive Branch*, 1 Feb. 1834, p. 199.

[15] Pencil note by Stella Gregg, in the margin of a copy of *The Literary Cabinet and Western Olive Branch*, 23 Nov. 1833, p. 159, given to the Western Reserve Historical Society and subsequently microfilmed.

[16] "Original Compositions," p. 28. This manuscript collection is in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[17] Ibid., p. 2.

[18] Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[19] Ibid., pp. 4, 5.

[20] Ibid., p. 4.

[21] Ibid., p. 12.

[22] Kilbourn, p. 109. See also Louis Leonard Tucker, "Cincinnati: Athens of the West, 1830-1861," *Ohio History*, 75 (1966), 11-25, and William H. Venable, *Beginnings of Literary Culture in the Ohio Valley* (Cincinnati: R. Clarke, 1891).

2. Carthage and Montrose

[1] For information on the colorful Isaac Galland, see *The History of Lee County, Iowa* (Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1879), pp. 548-49; William J. Petersen's "Historical Introduction" to the modern reprint of Galland's *Iowa Emigrant* (1840; rpt. Iowa City: Historical Society of Iowa, n. d.), pp. i-iii; Ruth S. Beitz, "The Extraordinary Dr. Galland," *The Iowan*, April-May, 1960, pp. 12-15, 50; Robert M. Cochran, "Dr. Isaac Galland," *Hancock County Historical Society Newsletter*, March, 1969, pp. 3-6 (available at Western Illinois University Library), and Lyndon W. Cook, "Isaac Galland–Mormon Benefactor," *Brigham Young University Studies*, 19 (1979), 261-84.

[2] Thomas Gregg, "Recollections of Old Times in Hancock," an undated newspaper clipping on page 18 of a scrapbook entitled "The Carthagenian and Herald of the Upper Mississippi," Folder 73 of the Gordon-Vestal Collection, Western Illinois University Library.

[3] Ibid.

[4] S. Augustus Mitchell, *Illinois in 1837* (Philadelphia: S. Augustus Mitchell, 1837), p. 80.

[5] Thomas Gregg to Hon. B. Warren, 15 Aug. 1890, pp. 5-6. In the Thomas Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library.

[6] John A. Gordon, "Editor Grew Exhuberantly Eloquent Over the Virgin Country," an undated newspaper clipping in a scrapbook, "Local History: Hamilton and Montebello," p. 82, in the Gordon-Vestal Collection.

[7] John A. Gordon, "By Early Candlelight," *Carthage Republican*, 19 Mar. 1924, p. 7. See also Pearl Gordon Vestal, "First Hancock County Paper Published June 18, 1836," (Carthage) *Hancock County Journal*, 18 June 1953, p. 6, and "The Carthagenian and Herald of the Upper Mississippi" scrapbook, Folder 73 of the Gordon-Vestal Collection, Western Illinois University Library.

[8] John Russell to Thomas Gregg, 30 Nov. 1836, in the Russell Family Papers, Box

1, at the Illinois State Historical Library.

[9] For information on John Lawton and his family, see "Rev. John Lawton," in Thomas Gregg's "Records of . . . Hancock County Pioneers," pp. 32-33. For additional information on Sarah, see "Obituary of Sarah Lawton Gregg" and "Reminiscences about the Late Sarah Lawton Gregg and Her Life in Hancock County," typescripts by Pearl Gordon Vestal on pp. 271-73 of the same manuscript volume.

[10] *The Constitution of the Carthage Female Benevolent Society* (Carthage: Th. Gregg, Printer, 1837), p. 3.

[11] See "An Act to Incorporate the Carthage Female High School and Teachers' Seminary" and "Record of the Proceedings of the Board of Trustees of the Carthage Female High School and Teachers' Seminary" in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copies in the Thomas Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[12] "Original Compositions," p. 30.

[13] Ibid., p. 48.

[14] "The Editor to the Public," *The Western Emigrant's Magazine and Historian of Times in the West*, May, 1837, p. 2.

[15] Sarah Gregg to Abby Lawton, 12 June 1837, as reprinted in "The Carthagenian, First Newspaper in Hancock County, Illinois," pp. 3-4, in Folder 73 of the Gordon-Vestal Collection, Western Illinois University Library. For other brief remarks on their situation at Fort Des Moines, see Thomas Gregg's "Newspaper Reminiscences," Hamilton *Dollar Monthly*, May, 1873, p. 8.

[16] "Letters from the Occident, No. 1," *The Western Adventurer and Herald of the Upper Mississippi*, 26 Aug. 1837, p. 4. For an account of these letters, see Philip D. Jordan, "Thomas Gregg's Letters to the New York Express," *The Annals of Iowa*, 18 (1933), 538-43.

[17] "The Olden Time in Iowa," an article written for the Keokuk *Constitution*, in a typescript copy by Pearl Gordon Vestal, in Gregg's "Records of . . . Hancock County Pioneers," p. 327.

[18] See "The Tall Cedar of Lebanon," an article written for the Keokuk *Gate City*, in a typescript by Pearl Gordon Vestal, in Gregg's "Records of . . . Hancock County Pioneers," p. 324.

[19] "The Indians Again," Montrose *Western Adventurer*, 14 Oct. 1837, p. 3.

[20] "Letters from the Occident, No. 2," in a typescript by Pearl Gordon Vestal, in Gregg's "Records of . . . Hancock County Pioneers," pp. 322-23.

[21] "Recollections of Old Times in Hancock, No. 3," an undated newspaper clipping on page 18 of a scrapbook entitled "The Carthagenian and Herald of the Upper Mississippi," Folder 73 of the Gordon-Vestal Collection, Western Illinois University Library.

[22] "Obituary," Montrose *Western Adventurer*, 12 Aug. 1837, p. 3. Gregg later reprinted this obituary, along with three poems that were based on it (including the one by Lydia Sigourney). See "The Indian Maiden," *Hamilton Representative*, 19 Feb. 1859, p. 1. See also, Philip D. Jordan, "The Source of Mrs. Sigourney's 'Indian Girl's Burial,'" *American Literature*, 4 (1932-33), 300-05.

[23] "Unrivalled Attraction. Great Sale of Lots in the New City of Humbug," Montrose *Western Adventurer*, 26 Aug. 1837, p. 2.

[24] "Other Anti-Abolition Mob in Alton," Montrose *Western Adventurer*, 9 Sept. 1837, p. 3.

[25] See A. L. Bowen, "Anti-Slavery Convention Held in Alton, Illinois, October 26-28, 1837," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 20 (1927-28), 338.

[26] John Russell to Thomas Gregg, 10 Jan. 1839, in John Flanagan, "Six Letters by John Russell," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 44 (1951), 34.

[27] "The Nation's Errors," p. 3.

[28] John Russell to Thomas Gregg, 2 Dec. 1837, in the Russell Family Papers, Box 1, at the Illinois State Historical Library.

[29] "Original Compositions," pp. 52-53.

[30] Ibid., p. 37.

[31] Ibid., p. 39.

3. Warsaw–the Early Years

[1] "Random Sketches of a Journey in Illinois," *The Western Emigrant's Magazine*, May, 1837, p. 6.

[2] Thomas Gregg to Hon. B. Warren, 15 Aug. 1890, p. 8.

[3] "Forts Edwards and Johnson," *Hamilton Representative*, 22 Jan. 1859, p. 2.

[4] "Towns on the Upper Mississippi," *Peoria Register and North-Western Gazetteer*, 19 Feb. 1841, p. 1.

[5] John Russell to Thomas Gregg, 15 Dec. 1840, in the Russell Family Papers, Box 1, at the Illinois State Historical Library.

[6] John Russell to Thomas Gregg, 8 Mar. 1839 and 19 Aug. 1840, in the Russell Family Papers, Box 1.

[7] This title for the school is given in a newspaper article by "A. B. C." (Thomas Gregg) that reprints some of the pupils' essays. See "Juvenile Compositions," Warsaw *Western World*, 24 June 1840, p. 1.

[8] The "Schedule of a Common School, Kept by Sarah D. Gregg" is quoted in "How Many Are Now Living?"–an undated newspaper clipping from the *Warsaw Bulletin*, in Folder 170 of the Gordon-Vestal Collection, Western Illinois University Library.

[9] "Original Compositions," p. 26.

[10] Ibid., p. 36.

[11] Ibid., p. 58.

[12] Ad in the *Warsaw Signal*, 8 Dec. 1841, p. 3.

[13] Pearl Gordon Vestal, "By or about Thomas Gregg: From the Warsaw Signal and Warsaw Message, 1840's," a typescript in Gregg's "Records of . . . Hancock County Pioneers," p. 310.

[14] "Warsaw Library Association," *Warsaw Signal*, 26 May 1841, p. 3.

[15] See "Temperance Meeting," *Warsaw Signal*, 2 Feb. 1842, p. 2.

[16] For biographical information on Sharp, see Gregg's *History of Hancock County, Illinois* (Chicago: Charles C. Chapman, 1880), pp. 748-57, and *Biographical Review of Hancock County* (Chicago: Hobart Pub. Co., 1907), pp. 108-12.

[17] "The Mormons," *Warsaw Signal*, 19 May 1841, p. 2.

[18] John Russell to Thomas Gregg, 7 July 1841, in the Russell Family Papers, Box 1.

[19] John Russell to Thomas Gregg, 17 Aug. 1841, in the Russell Family Papers, Box 1.

[20] Genealogical papers of the Gregg and Lawton families, in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois.

[21] Pearl Gordon Vestal, "By or about Thomas Gregg: From the Warsaw Signal and Warsaw Message, 1840's," in Gregg's "Records of . . . Hancock County Pioneers," p. 310.

[22] "Great Meeting of Anti-Mormons," *Warsaw Message*, 13 Sept. 1843, p. 1; "The Last Case at Nauvoo," *Warsaw Message*, 27 Sept. 1843, p. 3.

[23] "The Mormon Question," *Warsaw Message*, 27 Sept. 1843, p. 2.

[24] For a discussion of various concepts of democracy in Illinois prior to the Civil War, see George M. Frederickson, "The Search for Order and Community," *The Public and the Private Lincoln*, ed. Cullom Davis et al. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1979), pp. 86-98.

[25] "The Prairie Message and Hancock and McDonough County Advertiser" (broadside), 26 Dec. 1843, in the Illinois State Historical Library broadside collection.

[26] "Great Excitement at Carthage," *Warsaw Message*, 10 Jan. 1844, p. 2.

[27] "The Affair at Carthage," *Warsaw Message*, 17 Jan. 1844, p. 1.

[28] "The Compromise–Again," *Warsaw Message*, 31 Jan. 1844, p. 2.

[29] "Buckeye's Lamentation for Want of More Wives" and "Another Mormon Outrage," *Warsaw Message*, 7 Feb. 1844, pp. 1 and 3.

4. Rock Island, and Warsaw Again

[1] "Mary–A Heart History," Hamilton-Keokuk *Dollar Monthly*, April, 1875, p. 1. For information on the Gregg daughters, see the Gregg family papers, in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copies in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[2] Francis Higbee to Thomas Gregg, [day illegible] May 1844, in the Hardin Collection, Chicago Historical Society.

[3] Sarah Gregg to Thomas Gregg, 4 June 1844, in the Hardin Collection.

[4] James Gregg to Thomas Gregg, 28 June 1844, in the Hardin Collection, and Franklin A. Worrell to Thomas Gregg, 8 Aug. 1844, in the Thomas C. Sharp and Allied Anti-Mormon Papers at Yale University Library.

[5] "Remarks," Rock Island *Upper Mississippian*, 7 Sept. 1844, p. 1. The letter of William Law appears on the same page. For biographical information on Law, see Lyndon W. Cook, "'Brother Joseph is Truly a Wonderful Man; He is all We Could Wish a Prophet to Be': Pre-1844 Letters of William Law," *Brigham Young University Studies*, 20 (1980), 207-18.

[6] As quoted in Brigham Young's letter to Gregg, 23 Sept. 1845, p. 1, in the Mormon Collection of the Chicago Historical Society. (Gregg's letter to Young has not been located.)

[7] Thomas Gregg to John J. Hardin, 30 Mar. 1846, in the Hardin Collection.

[8] Emma Smith to Thomas Gregg, 21 Apr. 1846, in the Mormon Collection of the Chicago Historical Society.

[9] See "Towns in Hancock County," *Warsaw Signal*, 20 Nov. 1847, p. 3.

[10] "A Descriptive, Statistical, and Historical Chart of the County of Hancock" (February, 1846), at Western Illinois University Library.

[11] See, for example, George R. Gayler, "A Social, Economic, and Political study of the Mormons in Western Illinois, 1839-1846: A Re-evaluation," Diss. Indiana University, 1955, pp. 160-72, and Robert Bruce Flanders, "The Church Corporate as Body Politic," *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1965), pp. 211-41.

[12] Prospectus for the Keokuk *Iowa Morning Star*, in the *Warsaw Signal*, 5 Feb. 1845, p. 3.

[13] See C. R. Rasmussen, "The Story of the Newspapers of Keokuk," pp. 9-11, a typescript in the Keokuk Public Library, and Pearl Gordon Vestal, "Keokuk's 'Iowa Morning Star' Flashed Brilliantly Then Died," *Keokuk Date City*, 5 Mar. 1954, p. 2. No copies of this newspaper are known to exist.

[14] "Winter Song," *Warsaw Signal*, 27 Nov. 1847, p. 3.

[15] "December," *Warsaw Signal*, 8 Apr. 1848, p. 2.

[16] "Capt. Zach and the Lead Horse," and "Cenna: A Tale of the Early Settlement of Illinois," *Warsaw Signal*, 18 Mar. 1848, p. 1, and 5 Oct. 1848, p. 1.

[17] As quoted in Pearl Gordon Vestal, "Warsaw's 'Prairie Rose,'" p. 1, a typescript for a newspaper article, in Folder 86 of the Gordon-Vesta Collection, Western Illinois University Library.

[18] See the *Warsaw Signal*, 4 Dec. 1847, p. 3, and 14 Dec. 1848, p. 1.

[19] See A. S. Chapman, "The Boyhood of John Hay," *The Century*, 78 (1909), 451.

[20] See Gregg's headnote to a later poem of Hay's, "Midnight on the Hills," *Hamilton Representative*, 19 June 1858, p. 1.

[21] See "Inaugural Address of A. H. Worthen, Esq.," *Warsaw Signal*, 9 Feb. 1850, p. 3.

[22] Leon L. Lamet, "Warsaw Township," *History of Hancock County, Illinois* (Carthage: Hancock County Board of Supervisors, 1968), pp. 593-94.

[23] See Thomas Gregg, "Circular to the Citizens of Hancock County" and "Annual Exhibition of the Hancock County Agricultural Society," *Warsaw Signal*, 24 July 1852,

p. 1.

[24] See "Temperance Organizations," Warsaw *Temperance Crusader*, 15 Mar. 1854, p. 1.

[25] See "The Temperance Crusader to the Public" and "Prospectus of the Temperance Crusader," Warsaw *Temperance Crusader*, 15 Feb. 1854, pp. 2, 4.

[26] "Letter from Plymouth," by "Citizen," Warsaw *Temperance Crusader*, 15 May 1854, p. 2.

[27] "Murder at Plymouth," Warsaw *Temperance Crusader*, 15 May 1854, p. 2.

[28] Franklin William Scott, *Newspapers and Periodicals of Illinois 1814-1879*, Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library, VI (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1910), p. 349.

[29] *Fruit Culture for the Million* (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1857). It was reprinted twenty years later as *How to Raise Fruits*.

5. Plymouth and Hamilton

[1] "Prospectus of the Plymouth Locomotive," *Plymouth Locomotive*, 27 June 1857, p. 1.

[2] "Recollections of Plymouth" and "What Plymouth Needs," *Plymouth Locomotive*, 13 June 1857, p. 1. This issue is in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois.

[3] "To the Voters of Hancock County," *Plymouth Locomotive*, 24 Oct. 1857, p. 3.

[4] "Hamilton," Hamilton *Dollar Monthly*, June, 1873, p. 8.

[5] Pearl Gordon Vestal, "Thomas Gregg, Hancock County Historian, Early Day Editor," undated clipping from the *Burlington Hawkeye*, in Folder 86 of the Gordon-Vestal Collection at Western Illinois University Library.

[6] Pearl Gordon Vestal, "Notes about Thomas Gregg and His Family," and other untitled typescripts in Gregg's "Records of . . . Hancock County Pioneers," pp. 299, 333, 340.

[7] "Mark the Prediction," *Hamilton Representative*, 1 Jan. 1859, p. 2.

[8] Untitled, *Hamilton Representative*, 22 May 1858, p. 1.

[9] "First Quarter Closed–A Little Talk with Our Readers," *Hamilton Representative*, 7 Aug. 1858, p. 2.

[10] "Saints and Gentiles," *Hamilton Representative*, 8 Oct. 1859, p. 1.

[11] *Hamilton Representative*, Extra, 26 Mar. 1859, n.p.

[12] "To the Citizens of Hancock County," a circular dated July 20, 1860, in the broadside collection, Illinois State Historical Library.

[13] "Republic Central Committee for Hancock County," *Hamilton Representative*, 22 May 1858, p. 2.

[14] "September Meeting of the Downing Horticultural Club," *Hamilton Representative*, 27 Aug. 1859, p. 4.

[15] Thomas Gregg, *History of Hancock County, Illinois*, p. 818, and "Death of Th. Gregg, the Veteran Editor," *Warsaw Bulletin*, 12 Feb. 1892, p. 3.

[16] As quoted in Pearl Gordon Vestal, "The North-Western Fruit Grower's Companion, August 1862, Keokuk, Iowa," a typescript in Folder 86 of the Gordon-Vestal Collection.

[17] "The Battle of the Right," in *Poets and Poetry of the West*, ed. William T. Coggeshall (New York: Follett, Foster, 1860), p. 239.

[18] *Ruth: A Poem for the Times* (Warsaw, Illinois: New Era print, 1864), p. 14. A shorter version of the poem appeared two years earlier in the *Warsaw City Bulletin*, 27 Feb. 1862, p. 2. That version was entitled "Grand-Mother Ruth," and a note to the poem indicated that it "was suggested by Mr. Wm D. Gallagher's 'Uncle Nathan.'"

[19] "No!" is part of a brief manuscript entitled "A War Relic," in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[20] "War Memorial!" a circular dated January 1, 1866, in the broadside collection of the Illinois State Historical Library. See also, in the same collection, "The Hancock County War Memorial and Soldiers' Record," which offers a more thorough sketch of the proposed contents of the book, as well as endorsements from county residents.

[21] Thomas Gregg, "Warsaw Horticultural Society," *Warsaw Bulletin*, 5 July 1889, p. 2. See also, "The Warsaw Horticultural Society," *Warsaw Public Record*, 1 Mar. 1866, p. 2.

[22] "An Annual Address Delivered before the December Meeting of the Warsaw Horticultural Society," *Warsaw Public Record*, 11 Jan. 1867, p. 1.

[23] John A. Gordon, "Bits of Interesting Local and County History," a newspaper article dated June 20, 1929, in John Gordon Scrapbook No. 3, pp. 11-12, in Folder 62 of the Gordon-Vestal Collection. See also, Thomas Gregg, *History of Hancock County, Illinois*, pp. 463-64.

[24] Pearl Gordon Vestal, "Dr. Wm. H. Githens was Hamilton's First Postmaster, Appointed in 1853," *Quincy Herald Whig*, 6 Mar. 1955, p. 5.

[25] "Died" (Eva Gregg death notice), Keokuk *Daily Gate City*, 21 Dec. 1872, p. 1.

[26] See "Pioneer Themes," Hamilton *Dollar Monthly*, May, 1873, p. 12, and "Wanted–Old Files," Hamilton *Dollar Monthly*, July, 1872, p. 9.

[27] "Black Hawk: Some Account of His Life, Death, and Resurrection," Hamilton *Dollar Monthly*, May, 1873, p. 8.

[28] "The Indians," Hamilton-Keokuk *Rural Messenger*, August, 1876, p. 120. See also, "Lo, the Poor Indian," Hamilton *Dollar Monthly*, November, 1874, p. 1.

[29] "Legend of the Wishing Spring," Hamilton *Dollar Monthly*, May, 1874, p. 4.

[30] "The Indian Grave," Hamilton-Keokuk *Dollar Monthly*, July, 1876, p. 109.

[31] "Sketches of the Mormon Era in Hancock County–No. 7," Hamilton-Keokuk *Dollar Monthly*, June, 1875, p. 1.

[32] "After the Battle," "Hope, Mercy, Truth," "Waiting," "The Legend of

Einsideln," "Mary–A Heart History," and "At Her Grave," Hamilton *Dollar Monthly*, July, 1873, p. 16; September, 1873, p. 1; November, 1873, p. 12; April, 1874, p. 4; April, 1875, p. 1; and *Rural Messenger*, January, 1876, p. 4.

[33] "Hudibras Hawk-Eye's Salutation," Hamilton-Keokuk *Dollar Monthly*, January, 1875, p. 8.

[34] "Change of Programme," Hamilton-Keokuk *Dollar Monthly*, December, 1875, p. 8.

[35] "Letter from an Old Newspaper Man," *Augusta Herald*, 9 Aug. 1878, p. 2.

6. Hamilton–the Later Years

[1] The manuscript of "Independence Hymn" is in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Thomas Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[2] Gregg, *History of Hancock County, Illinois*, pp. 397-98.

[3] Ibid., pp. 748-57.

[4] Ibid., pp. 293-94, 301; 302-19.

[5] Ibid., p. 359.

[6] Ibid., p. 302.

[7] Ibid., pp. 340-41, 344.

[8] Ibid., p. 340.

[9] Ibid., pp. 339-40.

[10] Ibid., pp. 348-53.

[11] As quoted in Ida Blum, "Nauvoo," an article in the Ida Blum Scrapbooks, vol. 3, p. 59, at Western Illinois University Library.

[12] Letter to the *Missouri Republican*, 29 Sept. 1846, as printed in *The Prophet of Palmyra* (New York: John B. Alden, 1890), pp. 370-72.

[13] *The Prophet of Palmyra*, p. 374.

[14] Ibid., p. 270.

[15] Thomas Gregg to M. Brayman, 2 Sept. 1890, p. 2 (verso), in the University of Kansas Librairy (copy in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[16] Ibid., p. 2.

[17] "Report on Forestry," *Transactions of the Illinois State Horticultural Society for the Year 1884* (Champaign: Gazette Steam Print, for the Society, 1885), p. 14.

[18] "Death of J. Ambrose Wight," *Transactions of the Illinois State Horticultural Society for the Year 1889*, ed. A. C. Hammond (Alton: Sentinel Democrat Printing Co., for the Society, 1890), pp. 186-87.

[19] "What Shall be done with the Liquor Traffic?," p. 2 (verso). Manuscript in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[20] "Licens or No Licens," a manuscript in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Gregg collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[21] "The Saloon Question," p. 2. Manuscript in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[22] "Who Are Responsible?," p. 3. Manuscript in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[23] For a description of the anniversary celebration, see John A. Gordon, "Bits of Interesting Local and County History," a newspaper clipping in Folder 61, p. 42, of the Gordon-Vestal Collection.

[24] "Accident to Veteran Publisher," included in a letter from Stella Gregg to John A. Lawton, 29 Jan. 1925, p. 1, in a manuscript entitled "Five Clippings about Editor Gregg and Family, from Miss Stella Gregg," the Gordon-Vestal Collection.

[25] "Address Read at the Old Settlers' Reunion, held at Warsaw, Aug. 25, 1891," p. 1. Manuscript in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).

[26] "A Pioneer's Death" (Gregg's obituary), Keokuk *Daily Constitution-Democrat*, 11 Feb. 1892, p. 8.

[27] "Gregg, Thomas," *Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Hancock County*, II, ed. Charles J. Scofield (Chicago: Munsell Pub. Co., 1921), 1216. See also, "Death of Th. Gregg, the Veteran Editor," *Warsaw Bulletin*, 12 Feb. 1892, p. 3.

[28] Gay Davidson, "Thomas Gregg," *Carthage Republican*, 17 Feb. 1892, p. 5.

[29] D. W. Brownell, "A Golden Sunset: In Memory of Thos. Gregg." A printed, looseleaf copy of the poem is in the possession of James H. Lawton of Plymouth, Illinois (copy in the Gregg Collection, Western Illinois University Library).